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Haarlem.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

A HISTORICAL, CRITICAL, AND APOLOGETIC EXPOSITION

BY

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THE LIFE OF CHRIST

PART IV

(Continued)

FIFTH PERIOD

From the Feast of Tabernacles to the Feast of Dedication

This period bears a great likeness to that which Christ began a few months before. His dealings with the multitude are now brief and infrequent, and He devotes Himself more and more entirely to the work of training His Apostles. Up to this time He has dwelt habitually in Galilee, usually in the city of Capharnaum, whither He returned after each of His journeys; but henceforth He has no such center. Back and forth He goes in various directions, first in Lower Galilee, then in the southern part of Decapolis and in Peraea, where He stays some little time. Only about six months remain for Him on earth. He employs this time in laying the solid foundation of His work.

St. Matthew and St. Mark supply us with meager information for this period. If we were dependent solely on their narratives, we might be led to suppose that the events they relate took place within one or two weeks. In fact, they merely show us our Lord leaving Galilee and going to Jerusalem by way of Peraea and Jericho for the celebration of the Passover. Happily the Third Gospel gives us abundant details, setting forth a lengthy succession of events which otherwise

we should not have known. Whence did St. Luke obtain his knowledge of those events? Partly from special documents, at least one of which was written in Aramaic, for his style here and there, particularly at the beginning of those pages that are special to him,[1] has a manifestly Semitic coloring.

All three Synoptics tell us that Christ set out for the Jewish capital. The dominant idea of this whole passage—an idea connecting its numerous and varied incidents—is that of a journey starting in Galilee and terminating at Jerusalem, with Peraea as a district through which our Lord passed. This long journey began shortly after the Transfiguration and did not end until a few days before the Passion. It was made leisurely and lasted several months. Although the journey was more like a going back and forth than like a direct advance, and although it was interrupted by stops at various places, yet it was never abandoned. The sacred writer clearly marks out its sequence by repeatedly introducing expressions that serve as guide posts.[2] His account is a sort of itinerary, enabling us to accompany our Lord from Capharnaum to Jerusalem. Like the two other Synoptics, St. Luke gives us the impression that the Savior, when leaving Lake Genesareth and its countryside, was bidding it a last farewell.

But how are we to reconcile these details proper to the Third Gospel with those which St. John supplies about this same period? All four Gospel narratives agree as to the Savior's last visit to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. But in addition to that visit, the beloved disciple mentions two other journeys which Christ made to Jerusalem,[3] one for the Feast of Tabernacles,[4] the other for the Feast of Dedication.[5]

[1] Luke 9:51–18:14. From the latter point onward, his account runs parallel with the narratives of St. Matthew and St. Mark.

[2] Luke 9:51, 53; 13:22 f.; 17:11; 18:31; 19:11, 28.

[3] See Volume II, pp. 7 f.

[4] John 7:2—10:21.

[5] John 10:22–30.

The Fourth Gospel shows us the Savior afterwards in Peraea,[6] then at Bethania, whither He went to raise Lazarus from the dead,[7] then at Ephrem, a little town of Judea, to which He retired a few days before the Pasch.[8]

How are these details to be arranged? This exegetical problem raises serious difficulties, not, of course, with regard to the reality of the facts, which is beyond doubt in each of the accounts,[9] the divergences being merely external and without the least contradiction, but with regard to their chronological order and sequence. We may frankly acknowledge that none of the arrangements proposed by the most learned commentators and by the best biographers of Christ is absolutely satisfactory. This fact is easily explained, because St. John wrote his Gospel in an altogether independent manner, chiefly desirous of supplementing the Synoptics, especially upon this part of the Savior's life. But, as we shall see, St. Luke's narrative here and there has openings, where he places wayside landmarks along the route followed by our Lord; and at those points we can, without any improbability, insert Christ's visits to Jerusalem, as they appear in the Fourth Gospel.

[6] John 10:40.
[7] John 11:1–53.
[8] John 11:54.
[9] See Appendix I.

CHAPTER I

Jesus Leaves Galilee and Sets Out toward Jerusalem

I. The Beginning of the Journey

THE EVANGELIST St. John, who has given us no details of our Lord's life since the first multiplication of the loaves and the promise of the Eucharist,[10] sums up all the interval in the following words: "After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He would not walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him." [11] We may, therefore, infer that the Savior did not go to Jerusalem, either for the Passover that came soon after the multiplication of the loaves,[12] or for the following Pentecost. If, as we have supposed, the religious festival mentioned by St. John at the beginning of his fifth chapter [13] was also a Passover, then, at the point where he resumes his account, there had been more than a year during which our Lord made no journey to Jerusalem.

St. John clearly points out the reason why Jesus did not go to Judea: the religious leaders of Judaism were greatly displeased at the liberties He took with respect to the Temple and the Sabbath observance,[14] and their jealousy had been aroused by His miracles and His popularity with the masses. They were, therefore, determined to put Him to death. Hence His life would have been in grave peril at Jerusalem, and He must not and wished not (as He presently repeats) to

[10] John 6: 1–72.
[11] John 7: 1.
[12] John 6: 4.
[13] John 5: 1. See Volume II, pp. 7 f.
[14] John 2: 13–21; 5: 1–18.

anticipate the hour of His Passion, as determined in the eternal decrees. Hence at that time, so far as depended upon Him, He avoided every occasion of strife with His enemies. In Galilee He had lost a considerable number of disciples and saw His popularity wane; but His life was not threatened in that province. Nevertheless He judged it well to adopt a new manner of life, because of the murmuring against Him, which was to be heard there also. For this reason, as we have seen, He spent the previous few months in going to and fro [15] in various directions, accompanied only by His Apostles and having the least possible contact with the multitudes.

The Feast of Tabernacles (or Tents) was near at hand. This, along with the Passover and Pentecost, was one of the three great religious festivals which all Jews, unless exempted by good reasons, were obliged to celebrate at Jerusalem. It was instituted by God Himself,[16] to preserve the memory of the prolonged wanderings of the Hebrews in the desert of Pharan before their settling in Chanaan, and the blessings which God continually bestowed upon them at that time. Therefore, during the whole period of this feast, the Jews who were at Jerusalem dwelt in tents made of foliage and erected in the streets and squares of the city, in the courtyards and on the flat roofs of the houses, and in the gardens near the city.[17] This practice explains the principal name given to the festival. It was also called "the harvest festival," because one of its purposes was to thank the Creator for His bountiful and unceasing gifts. It was celebrated at the close of the harvesting season, in the month of Tishri, the seventh month of the Jewish year,[18] for eight full days (from the fifteenth to the twenty-second), about the beginning of October.

[15] St. John graphically expresses this thought by using the verb περιπατεῖν.
[16] Lev. 23:33–43; Deut. 16:13–16.
[17] See Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 85, fig. 1.
[18] Corresponding partly to our September, partly to October.

Josephus[19] says that it was the Jews' greatest feast. It certainly was the most popular. During the whole octave the people indulged in merry and noisy demonstrations, which sometimes degenerated into license—to such an extent that the pagan Plutarch, who witnessed them, thought he was present at a feast of Bacchus.[20] We shall presently have occasion to describe several symbolic ceremonies that enhanced its splendor.

A few days before this festival, some of Christ's "brethren" —that is, closely related cousins—joined Him at Capharnaum, whither He had just returned.[21] They said to Him: "Pass from hence and go into Judea, that Thy disciples also may see Thy works which Thou dost. For there is no man that doth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If Thou do these things, manifest Thyself to the world."[22] This advice, which they presumed to give the Savior, was as strange as it was ill-judged. The Evangelist therefore adds a word of explanation: "For neither did His brethren believe in Him." This is a sad and tragic remark, which likewise alludes to the unbelief of so many other Jews. Yet the lack of faith on the part of these unworthy brethren was not an absolute unbelief. They at least believed in the reality of the miracles, which had impressed them. On account of Christ's numerous miracles, His preaching, and His successes, they suspected that God had some special purpose in view for Him. But they were unwilling to acknowledge that He was the Messias, since He refused to conform to the Messianic ideal which they and the great mass of their countrymen had formed. According to their view, the Messias was to be altogether glorious. Instead of keeping in the shadow,

[19] *Ant.*, IV, viii, 12; VIII, iv, 1 and 5; *Bell. Jud.*, II, xix, 1, etc.

[20] *Sympos.*, IV, vi, 2.

[21] Matt. 17:23; Mark 9:32.

[22] John 7:3 f. St. John is our only guide for the entire account relative to the Feast of Tabernacles.

He was to show Himself in full light and to seek and win disciples and adherents, not in Galilee, a hidden province from the religious point of view, but in Judea, at Jerusalem, the historic center of the country and of the theocratic race. The Savior's relatives, therefore, blame Him for remaining in an equivocal, nay, even contradictory position. To make Him emerge from it they urge Him to go to Jerusalem, if He thinks He is the Messias, and there be enthroned at the Feast of Tabernacles, which would draw hundreds of thousands of Jews to the capital. "Manifest Thyself to the world," *i. e.*, to the whole Jewish world, they say. Such is the close of their little discourse, in which vanity, disappointment, and worldly logic are closely mingled.

Had Jesus been a Messianic impostor, like those ambitious men who, before and after Him, brought such bloody woes upon Palestine and the Jewish nation, He might have been tempted to yield to the reasoning of His "brethren." But He awaited the solemn ratification of His mission from God, and from God alone. He knew it would have to be the result, not of a joyous and brilliant installation, but of humiliation, suffering, and death. To that unjust criticism of His conduct and that vain urging, He merely replied with that firm but gentle kindliness that was often remarked by early interpreters: "My time is not yet come; but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I give testimony of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go you up to this festival day; but I go not up to this festival day, because My time is not accomplished."

His refusal was absolute. And it rested on good reasons, the chief of which was the will of God, who did not at that time sanction the journey that was so unwisely urged. Without entering into a profitless discussion with His "brethren," our Lord refers to a striking contrast between them and Him. They had mentioned "the world"; He takes up the idea and

speaks of the attitude of the world toward Him and them. The Jewish world, in the person of its spiritual leaders, had nothing but implacable hatred for Jesus, who strove unceasingly against it and openly laid bare its vices and weaknesses. To go to Jerusalem now would be to court certain death. Not at this festival,[23] but at the next Passover, "His time," *i. e.*, the providential hour, will have come. His "brethren" belong to the world and share its feelings: let them go up[24] to Jerusalem and there celebrate the feast of Tabernacles. They need fear no danger, for they will be looked upon as friends.

Up to this point the narrative is quite clear. But how are we to explain the next portion of the account? The Evangelist says: "After His brethren were gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret." The pagan Porphyry pretended to be shocked at this seeming contradiction and sarcastically pointed to the "inconstancy" and fickleness of Christ.[25] To remove the difficulty, the Gospel text was altered at an early date so as to read, "I go not up *yet* . . . ,"[26] or "I go not up *now* to Jerusalem."[27] But these are false and unfair interpretations or corrections. Let us recall Mary's request addressed to her Divine Son at the wedding feast of Cana, and His reply. A few moments after telling His mother, "My hour is not yet come," He complied with her petition and miraculously changed the water into wine.[28] We are here in the presence of a similar case, with this difference, that there is a much greater interval between the refusal and the contrary act. When the Savior said that He would not go to the feast yet, did He not show that He

[23] The pronoun used here is very emphatic.

[24] This is a technical expression designating a journey to Jerusalem, which was at a higher altitude. See Volume I, p. 92.

[25] St. Jerome, *Adv. Pelag.*, II, 17.

[26] Οὔπω instead of the simple negative οὐκ.

[27] See St. John Chrysostom and other commentators.

[28] John 2:2–11.

intended to be present, but would set out only at the hour willed by His Heavenly Father? It was not for the purpose of manifesting Himself to the world that He would spend a few days at Jerusalem.

St. Luke opens his account of the journey with a mysterious and solemn expression: "When the days in which He [Jesus] must be taken away [29] [from the world] were accomplished, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem." These two lines, with their many Aramaicisms, are quite dramatic. They show us our Lord on the way to the Jewish capital, knowing full well what awaited Him there, and yet advancing, as St. Jerome says,[30] *"magno et erecto animo,"* ready to face all dangers. Moreover, these lines draw our attention to the fact that the Savior's earthly life was nearing its end.

Jesus at first followed the shortest and most direct route, the one that crossed the plain of Esdraelon, then Samaria and Judea. Perhaps it was in the evening of the first day's march, in the neighborhood of the ancient city of En Gannim (now Djenin), that the characteristic incident occurred which is recounted by St. Luke.[31] Being then within the confines of Samaria, Jesus decided to send ahead messengers to some town not named by the Evangelist, to engage lodging and buy provisions for Him and His companions. But the inhabitants flatly refused to receive Him because, as the very expressive Hebraicism of the sacred text says, "His face was of one going to Jerusalem." We have already [32]

[29] The Greek text has the noun ἀναλήμψις, which in the New Testament usually means Christ's return to Heaven (1 Tim. 3:16), and refers especially to His Ascension (Mark 16:19; Acts 1:2, 11, 22). Like the word ἔξοδος in an earlier passage (Luke 9:31; see Volume II, p. 561), it sums up all the sorrowful and glorious circumstances through which Christ must pass before returning to Heaven.

[30] *Epist.* 51, *ad Algas.*, 5. The expression "set His face" is quite Semitic. Cf. Is. 50:7; Jer. 21:10; Ezech. 6:2; 13:17; 15:7, etc.

[31] Luke 9:51–56.

[32] Volume I, pp. 103 f.

spoken of the unfriendly feeling that existed between the Jews and the Samaritans. In the case of many members of each people, that feeling reached the point of hatred and became doubly violent at the time of the religious pilgrimages which drew throngs of Israelites to Jerusalem. The Samaritans, looking upon the sanctuary in the Jewish capital as a rival to their own temple on Mount Gerizim, which had been destroyed by the Jews a century before, took pleasure in mischievously annoying the pilgrims, delaying and even hindering their journey, so far as they could.[33] It was by way of exception that Christ had been so well received at Sychar in the early days of His ministry; and He was not then on His way to Jerusalem.

When the messengers came back and reported the insult offered their Master, James and John could not restrain their indignation. These "sons of thunder" [34] said to Jesus: "Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" [35] Their wish certainly sprang from a lively faith and devoted love; but therein was mingled much imperfection. Were they themselves the messengers so outrageously dismissed by the Samaritans? Sometimes it has been surmised that such was the case, especially on account of the vivacity of their words, as though they were smarting under the affront. But this is a mere hypothesis. The Savior, of course, refused to sanction the requested petition. Turning toward the two brothers, He sternly reproved them, saying: "You know not of what spirit you are. The Son of Man came not to destroy men,[36] but to save." [37] Under the Old

[33] Josephus, *Ant.*, XX, vi, 1; *Bell. Jud.*, II, xii, 3–7; *Vita*, 52.

[34] Mark 3: 17. *"Quid mirum filios tonitrui fulgurare voluisse?"* St. Ambrose says, *Exposit. in Luc., h. l.*

[35] In several manuscripts there is inserted a gloss, adding: "As Elias did." The allusion is to the incident related in 4 Kings 1: 10–12.

[36] The text says "souls," *i. e.*, lives of men.

[37] This whole reply of Christ is omitted in various Greek and Latin manuscripts, where we read simply: "Turning round, He rebuked them." For this

Covenant, Elias did indeed cause avenging fire to come down from heaven to punish the ministers of a sacrilegious king; but the New Covenant brought the spirit of love and forgiveness to the world. That was the spirit our Lord wished to inculcate in His disciples; His motto was, To save, to save in any case.[38] The sons of Zebedee were far from possessing this spirit, in spite of their long association with the gentlest and most patient of masters, who thought only of comforting and healing, and who constantly returned good for evil.

The Savior then resumed His journey to reach some more hospitable town. At this point St. Luke relates [39] three little scenes that aptly illustrate our Lord's pedagogical method. St. Matthew [40] also recounts the first two, but he refers them to a different occasion. According to his account, they took place just before Christ miraculously calmed the tempest. We give preference to the order followed by the Third Gospel, because the events which we are now to consider belong to this final journey of our Lord rather than to an earlier period. More than ever, His concern is to attach to Himself courageous disciples, endowed with great strength of soul, since He is going forward to meet suffering and death. Did the three scenes occur on one and the same occasion, immediately following one another, as they are recounted? That is not impossible. But we may suppose that there was some interval between them and that the Evangelists connect them together on account of their similarity.

It is a question of the calling of three disciples, which was decided instantly, and in opposite senses, with thoroughly

reason most of the critical editions suppress it. But its presence in other manuscripts, in the Itala, the Vulgate, and the writings of many Fathers allow its authenticity to be defended. See Knabenbauer, *Comment. in Evang. S. Lucae*, pp. 327 f.

[38] "*Haec est brevissima et apertissima differentia duorum Testamentorum: timor et amor*," says St. Augustine, *Contr. Adam.*, 17.

[39] Luke 9: 57–62.

[40] Matt. 8: 19–22.

divine perspicacity. The first was a Scribe, as St. Matthew informs us. This may seem to be a surprising fact. But did not our Lord have followers (secret ones, indeed) even among the members of the Sanhedrin? This Scribe came to the Savior just as the latter was about to set out, and said to Him: "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou shalt go." He must have affectedly stressed the "whithersoever." Although he may have partly glimpsed the material and moral difficulties to which he would expose himself in spontaneously offering to accompany Jesus "whithersoever," in his enthusiasm he was far from comprehending and foreseeing all. He spoke the language of transient, unreflecting emotion, which reckons obstacles as nothing, so long as they are remote, and which, without a call from above, sets forth to meet them. This does not mean that this aspirant, however shallow and self-confident, was not sincere. The Master does not explicitly refuse to accept him, but merely replies: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air shelters;[41] but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." This was quite true, especially at that particular time. Whereas the most vagabond creatures, living from one day to the next, have safe retreats, either underground or in the branches of trees, the Son of Man, the Messias, had no assured lodging place, as a recent incident clearly proved. Whoever wished to join Him and follow Him in His wanderings, must therefore expect a life of poverty, self-denial, and continual sacrifices.

Of His own accord Christ said to another, who was already a disciple in the broad sense of the term: "Follow Me." From several famous examples we know what such an invitation meant.[42] He whom the Savior thus honored, replied: "Lord,

[41] The Vulgate translates the Greek noun *κατασκηνώσεις* by *nidos;* but the Greek word has rather the general meaning of "habitations." Moreover, birds do not regularly live in nests.

[42] Matt. 4:19, 21; 9:9; John 1:43.

suffer me first to go and to bury my father." Many commentators think that this disciple's father was an old man, but still living, and that the son was asking leave to go and care for him until his death. But this view is hardly tenable, because it is evident that the Savior wished this disciple to join His followers at once. The request for a delay that might last some years would, therefore, have no sense. In fact, the disciple's father had just died, and the son was merely asking the Divine Master for a few days' delay, that he might attend the funeral; he would then return and place himself entirely at the Savior's disposal. Jesus answered: "Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou, and preach the Kingdom of God." This is an explicit refusal, with the reasons expressed in figurative and paradoxical language. Of course, Christ did not for a moment think of weakening filial devotedness, which He had but recently so forcefully defended against the Scribes and Pharisees.[43] In the present instance He is not laying down a general rule; He is solving an exceptional case of conscience in which a vocation, and consequently the salvation of a soul, is at stake. He foresaw that if this disciple, instead of following Him at once, should go away to his father's funeral, he would not come back. Hence, for the sake of higher interests, He wished to keep him with Him. A sort of hierarchy exists in the series of our duties: religious obligations outweigh family duties, even the holiest. Moreover, the Jewish law at times forbade certain individuals to take part in the funeral of even their closest kinsfolk.[44] Our Lord's reply contains an easily comprehensible play on words. He uses the word "dead" in a double sense, first figuratively, then literally, as though He said: Leave to the people of the world, who to a large extent are spiritually dead (dead to grace), the task

[43] Cf. Matt. 15:3–9.

[44] Lev. 21:10–12; Num. 6:6 f.; 19:11–14.

of burying the lifeless remains of their brethren; such an office is quite suitable for them.

A third disciple offered himself of his own accord, like the first, saying: "I will follow Thee, Lord; but let me first take my leave of them that are at my house." [45] He, too, asked only for a brief delay, to take his leave of his relatives and friends and servants. But neither in this case did Jesus grant the request. He replied: "No man putting his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God." This was equivalent to saying, by means of a different figure, that no delay is possible when there is question of entering the service of God. Whoever, instead of looking steadily forward, turns his head at every least pretext to see what is going on about him, would plow a crooked, uneven furrow; and so he is admonished [46] to keep bending over his plow. The true disciple of Christ likewise ought not let himself be distracted by any worldly preoccupation; otherwise he will not be fit to preach the Kingdom of God and to perform his duty in all fulness.

These three disciples were imperfect, each in a different way. The first, enthusiastic and presumptuous, deceived himself as to his perseverance; Jesus rejected him by a short description of the life of poverty and mortification led by those who accompanied Him. The second was irresolute; he needed to be urged and prodded, to prevent his being unfaithful to the divine call. The third was of a character between the two; Christ did not discourage him, neither did He urge him; He simply proposed a serious remark for him to consider, leaving it to him to make the decision. What profit did they derive from our Lord's words of wisdom? The Evangelists do not

[45] The Greek phrase *τοῖς εἰς τὸν οἶκόν μου* is ambiguous. It may be translated by the masculine, as we have done, following St. Irenaeus, Tertullian, and many ancient and modern commentators; or it may be considered neuter. In the latter case, it would mean: "Allow me to go to set my affairs in order, before definitely following Thee." This interpretation is favored by many.

[46] Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, XVIII, xix, 41.

say; for them the essential thing is the Savior's teaching. What a great director of souls Christ is, and what a divinely able teacher! He strengthens and encourages the weak and rejects doubtful vocations. He wishes in His immediate service as helpers in the preaching of the gospel to have only men of generous heart and strong will, who, following His own example, can make every sacrifice, beginning with themselves, for the great and holy cause of founding the Kingdom of God.

II. The Seventy-two Disciples

Although it is not possible to be sure of the regular order of events in this period of Christ's life, yet, in accordance with St. Luke's account, we may place at this point (shortly before the Feast of Tabernacles) the episode relating to the seventy-two disciples. Perhaps it did not occur until the end of our Lord's visit to Jerusalem at the time of that feast.

The reason why our Lord now took so large a number of new helpers is plain. Time was urgent, and Christ wished to evangelize many other places where He had not yet exercised His ministry. To each of them He could devote only a few hours. It was, therefore, necessary that so brief a visit should be prepared for, so as to produce the greatest possible fruit. The preliminary preaching of these disciples, as that of the Apostles had formerly been, would prove useful to awaken men's minds and warm their hearts. Hence our Lord formed a special group, choosing its members from the ablest and most zealous of His followers, that He might send them ahead to all the towns and villages which He Himself intended to visit.

What was their exact number? According to early documents of great weight,[47] it was seventy-two. But other documents, of almost equal authority, reduce this number to

[47] Among them, the Itala and the Vulgate.

seventy. Whether our Lord chose seventy or seventy-two disciples, their number seems to have been symbolic, like that of the Apostles. Depending upon the reading adopted, it has been compared to the seventy or seventy-two peoples sprung from Noe, according to the tenth chapter of Genesis, or to the seventy ancients whom the God of Israel directed Moses to choose as counsellors,[48] or to the seventy members of the Jewish Sanhedrin. Whatever may be the fact as to these secondary details, this group of disciples differed essentially from the College of the Apostles,[49] for its existence was to be only temporary and its duties were to last barely a few weeks. At any rate, those who had the honor of belonging to it formed a body of experienced missionaries, who were later to become valuable fellow-laborers for the Apostles. Attempts have been made to reconstruct the list of them. But this is futile, for Eusebius [50] says that no such list was in existence in his time. At the very most we may suppose that the seventy-two disciples included Barnabas,[51] Sosthenes,[52] Matthias,[53] and Joseph Barsabbas.[54]

Before sending these new preachers into the southern districts of Palestine, the Savior gave them a few instructions about their ministry. St. Luke records them [55] as follows.

"The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He send laborers into His harvest. Go. Behold I send you as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse nor scrip nor shoes; and salute no man by the way. Into whatsoever house you enter, first say: Peace be to this house.

[48] Num. 11:16 f.
[49] See Appendix II.
[50] *Hist. eccl.*, I, 12.
[51] Acts 4:36.
[52] 1 Cor. 1:1.
[53] Acts 1:21, 26.
[54] Acts 1:23.
[55] Luke 10:2–16.

And if the son of peace[56] be there, your peace shall rest upon him; but if not, it shall return to you. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they have; for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Remove not from house to house. And into what city soever you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick that are therein and say to them: The Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city you enter, and they receive you not, going forth into the streets thereof, say: Even the very dust of your city that cleaveth to us, we wipe off against you. Yet know this, that the Kingdom of God is at hand. I say to you, it shall be more tolerable at that day for Sodom, than for that city."

With slight differences, these instructions repeat the first part of the Master's discourse to the Twelve on a like occasion.[57] The repetition is quite natural. As on the former occasion, Christ first points out the reason why He sends this large number of gospel laborers into His Father's field: the grain was ripe and the harvest gave promise of being plentiful. On the other hand, He reminded them that they would be like sheep among wolves. He then outlined the way they would have to conduct themselves upon leaving Him, upon reaching the various cities and villages, during their stay if they were well received, and upon leaving such towns if they were not well received. They are to make no preparations for their journey, nor are they to carry useless baggage; they are to waste no time in idle conversations.[58] Without hesitation and without self-indulgence they are to accept their fellow-countrymen's hospitality, but to leave at once any places that

[56] "A son of peace." This is a Hebraism meaning: If in the house there is a man worthy of the graces that you bring him.

[57] As to the false conclusions which the Rationalist critics draw from this resemblance, see Appendix II.

[58] This is the force of the words: "Salute no man by the way." The expression alludes to the Orientals' elaborate and endless forms of politeness. Cf. Tristram, *Eastern Customs in Bible Lands*, p. 57.

refuse to receive them, announcing by word and act the divine punishment to which such places expose themselves. In its general theme, their preaching will not differ from that of John the Baptist or that of the Apostles or that of the Savior Himself.[59]

Jesus spoke briefly of the cities that would refuse to receive His envoys. This thought brings to His mind certain painful memories. Three important towns on the lake shore, honored above all others by His presence, teaching, and miracles, had, for the most part, remained without belief in Him. Against them He now utters a threefold anathema.[60] We quote it from St. Matthew's account, which connects it with the Baptist's embassy to Christ. Most commentators consider that date too early, because such forceful curses are better explained at the close of the Savior's ministry, when His failure in the ungrateful cities had become evident to the eyes of all.

"Woe to thee, Corozain, woe to thee, Bethsaida; for if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in you, they had long ago done penance in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capharnaum, shalt thou be exalted up to heaven? Thou shalt go down even unto hell. For if in Sodom had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in thee, perhaps it had remained unto this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee." [61]

Since our Lord's gentleness and mercy were so boundless, His heart must have been wounded most deeply for Him to utter such maledictions. But the three cities which He mentions by name were so extremely guilty! After all they had directly seen and heard of Him, during the many months He

[59] Cf. Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7.
[60] Luke 10:13–15.
[61] Matt. 11:20–24.

spent in or near them; what excuse could they offer for their indifference, or rather unbelief? Even immoral Sodom, even the pagan cities of Tyre and Sidon, intent on their pleasures and their flourishing commerce, would have been converted had they received from Heaven graces comparable to those bestowed on Corozain, Bethsaida, and Capharnaum; they would have humbly repented, after the manner of those ancient times, by putting on coarse garments and sprinkling their heads with ashes.[62] What a humiliation for the three privileged Jewish cities to be compared with three pagan cities, whose infamies and exemplary punishment are often spoken of by the sacred writers! Their crime could not remain unpunished.

Of the three cities which our Lord reproached for not having known Him, Bethsaida and Capharnaum, especially the latter, had appeared several times before in the Gospel narrative. But Corozain is nowhere else mentioned in the New Testament. Nor is it referred to in the Old Testament or in the writings of Josephus. The Talmud praises the fine quality of its wheat.[63] Modern Palestinologists generally identify it with the place called Kerdizeh, the extensive ruins of which are located in a valley two or three miles northwest of Tell Hum (Capharnaum) and at a little distance from the lake.[64] Its site was a wilderness in the time of Eusebius and St. Jerome.[65]

There was good reason for mentioning Capharnaum separately and threatening it with a more severe punishment. It had been much more privileged, since for several years

[62] In Bible lands this was and still is a sign of deep mourning. See Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* pl. 26, fig. 7. Cf. Is. 58:5; Jer. 6:26; Jonas 3:6, etc.

[63] Neubauer, *Géographie du Talmud,* p. 220.

[64] Victor Guérin describes them in his work *La Galilée,* I, 241–245. Particularly noteworthy are those of a synagogue which was built of beautiful basalt blocks.

[65] *Onomasticon,* under the word Χωραζεΐν.

Jesus had deigned to make it His ordinary place of residence, —"His own city," as the Evangelists say;[66] it was, therefore, guilty of a greater abuse of God's graces. The Savior, addressing His words directly to Capharnaum, says that, after it is raised aloft to the very heavens, it will sink to the depths of the abode of the dead, which was spoken of as being in the heart of the earth. This is another way of saying that, after rising to the height of honor, it will reach the depth of humiliation.[67]

It was as a judge invested with supreme authority and as an infallible prophet that the outraged Messias pronounced this condemnation. And it was terribly fulfilled. "On all this land, the woe has fallen. . . . The vineyards and fruit-gardens have disappeared, the fleets and fishing boats cease to traverse the lake; the hum of men is silent; the stress of prosperous commerce has ceased to flow; and where once they shone bright and populous, flinging their shadows across the sunlit waters, there are now grey mounds where even the ruins are too ruinous to be distinguishable." [68] Immediately following a celebrated passage describing the beauties of the lake and plain of Genesareth,[69] Josephus relates the terrible evils which the Roman legions inflicted on this whole district.[70] A few pages earlier,[71] he confesses that "it was certainly God who brought the Romans to punish the Galileans, and did then expose the cities every one of them manifestly to be destroyed by their bloody enemies." And that happened less than forty years after Christ's death!

That He might not leave His disciples under the painful

[66] Matt. 9: 1.

[67] Christ seems here to be making use of Isaias' forceful language in denouncing Babylon. (Is. 14: 13–15.)

[68] Farrar, *Life of Christ*, 23d ed., II, 100 f.

[69] *Bell. Jud.*, III, x, 7.

[70] *Bell. Jud.*, III, x, 8.

[71] *Ibid.*, III, vii, 31.

impression of these anathemas, the Savior concluded His pastoral instruction with these comforting words: "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me." He thus identifies them with Himself and His heavenly Father. Were they not His envoys? In all times and all countries, is not an ambassador regarded as forming one moral person with the one whom he represents? [72]

The new missionaries were not to be absent very long. At the appointed time and place, after Christ Himself had briefly visited the localities through which they had passed, so as to supplement their preaching and to reap the fruits of it, He gathered them about Him. St. Luke, while not entering upon any details about their work of evangelization, briefly describes the charming scene that occurred upon their return.[73]

They came back full of joy, because brilliant success had everywhere crowned their efforts. They said to Jesus: "Lord, the devils also are subject to us in Thy name." The happiness filling their hearts and reflected in their faces, found an echo in their short report. From their words about the devils being subject to them, it appears that the seventy-two disciples did not expect this special result. With naïve simplicity they mention it as if they considered it the greatest victory they had won during their recent mission. Though their Master had not expressly conferred on them the power to drive out devils, they had succeeded in freeing possessed persons by invoking the Savior's all-powerful name. Hence their joyful surprise.

Jesus begins His reply by saying: "I saw Satan fallen [74] like lightning from heaven." Was He alluding to Satan's primor-

[72] Cf. Matt. 10:40; John 13:20.

[73] Luke 10:17–24.

[74] Such is the force of the aorist participle in the Greek, πεσόντα, "having fallen." It denotes something that has already happened.

dial fall, previous to the creation of man, as it is briefly sketched by St. John in the Apocalypse?[75] Several Fathers, following Origen,[76] have supposed so, adding that the Savior reminded His disciples of that terrible example to inspire them with feelings of humility; for He saw that they were too humanly impressed by their victories over the devil. This view, however, is now abandoned, as there is nothing to indicate that the satisfaction felt by the disciples sprang from any imperfect source. Jesus wished rather to say to His valiant missionaries: In reporting your success over the prince of devils you are telling Me nothing which I did not already know; I followed you with prophetic look and saw him stripped of his usurped power all along your route. What was a surprise to His envoys, seemed to Him quite natural. Thanks to the power of the Messias, whose kingdom was now inaugurated, Satan lay prone on the ground, and his fall was as swift as a flash of lightning which illumines the horizon for only an instant.[77]

The Divine Master then continued: "Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you. But yet rejoice not in this, that spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice in this, that your names are written in heaven."[78]

To explain to the disciples the success of their exorcisms, our Lord tells them that, without their knowing it, He had supplied them with irresistible powers against the devils—here represented under the figure of dangerous beasts. Christ, after His Resurrection,[79] would renew this immunity and extend its limits. While sharing and approving their joy, He gives them a far loftier reason for confidence and exultation.

[75] Apoc. 12:7–12. Cf. Jude 6.
[76] *De Princip.*, I, v, 5; *De Orat.*, XXVI, 5; *Contr. Cels.*, IV, 92.
[77] This dramatic figure may have been suggested by Is. 14:12.
[78] Luke 10:19 f.
[79] Mark 16:18.

The power to drive out evil spirits from the bodies of the possessed is certainly a precious gift; but it is a privilege of secondary importance, if compared with the possession of Heaven. And He does not guarantee that they are to enjoy this.[80] For anyone to know that he is predestined, that his name is written in the list of the elect, is a source of higher joy, in which he may delight in all safety.

St. Luke continues, saying: "In that same hour He rejoiced in the Holy Ghost." [81] These words mean that the Divine Spirit, who directed every act of Christ's soul, wholly filled it with a lively joy. This detail is unique in the life of Christ. Amidst so many reasons for sadness, He was happy contemplating the wonderful results of His ministry and countless sacrifices. Impelled by this divine transport, He spoke words of utmost beauty and depth, which have won the admiration of nineteen centuries. They superbly sum up Catholic dogma in a poetic form of exquisite charm:

"I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent,
and hast revealed them to little ones.
Yea, Father; for so hath it seemed good in Thy sight.
All things are delivered to Me by My Father,
and no one knoweth the Son, but the Father,
neither doth anyone know the Father, but the Son,
and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him." [82]

It is often said that in these lines we might think we were reading a passage from the Fourth Gospel.[83] They prove that

[80] Cf. Matt. 7:22 f.

[81] According to a less warranted reading: "He rejoiced in spirit."

[82] Matt. 11:25–27; Luke 10:21 f. It is our opinion that St. Luke assigns these words of Christ to their proper chronological place; the connection of ideas, as indicated by him, is better than in the First Gospel. St. Matthew connects this passage with the embassy from John the Baptist.

[83] Karl Hase speaks of them as "a meteorite fallen from the Johannine heaven." *Geschichte Jesu,* sect. 61.

a close harmony exists between St. John's Gospel and the writings of the Synoptics.

It is in the form of a tender outpouring of His heart into that of His heavenly Father, that Jesus at first gives free expression to His feelings. He offers praise and felicitation and thanks to the Father,[84] in connection with two remarkable instances of His providential conduct regarding the Kingdom of Heaven. God conceals its mysteries from those who are wise according to the flesh and reveals its secrets to the humble and lowly. To pride of mind He replies by inflicting blindness; to simplicity and humility of heart, by a wonderful illumination. Thus is it that the Scribes are put aside, whereas the Apostles, the disciples, and so many others who are "little ones" in the world's esteem, are admitted to the innermost sanctuary of divine revelation.[85] Not that intellectual power is in itself an obstacle to the reception of the Gospel; but it is not at all necessary. To appropriate Christ's teaching and to walk in the footsteps of this perfect Master, the chief requisite is moral character, not acuteness of mind.

After bearing witness to this conduct of His Father, Christ pauses a moment, as if to taste its wisdom. Then He launches into renewed praise. "Yea, Father; for so hath it seemed good in Thy sight." The next words are of inestimable value to the theologian, for they affirm with invincible force and clearness the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. From His heavenly Father He has received unlimited, sovereign powers;[86] He is adequately known only by the Father; and He alone thoroughly and absolutely knows His Father:[87] such are the three fundamental truths which He reveals to us in these prodigiously pregnant lines, which contain an

[84] This is the meaning of the verb ἐξομολογοῦμαι (Vulg., *confiteor*).

[85] St. Paul gives us a fine commentary on this twofold truth in 1 Cor. 1:23–31.

[86] Cf. Ps. 2:8; Matt. 28:18.

[87] Literally, according to St. Luke: "Who the Son is, who the Father is."

abridgment of the whole Christology of the Fourth Gospel. We should also note that the way the Savior refers to the powers He has received from His Father, His unique relations with God and those of God with Him presuppose certain facts existing from all eternity. He therefore declares His preëxistence, which, moreover, was a privilege of the Messias according to the belief of the Jews of that time.[88] Christ here clearly expresses the mystery of His divine life, His divine power, His infinite knowledge, and His relations with God as equal with equal.

The last part of the second stanza of the Savior's words describes how the humble, His privileged "little ones," obtained the knowledge of the mysteries hidden from the proud. They were revealed to them by Christ Himself, for whom nothing concerning God and the things of God remains secret. This manifestation forms one of the chief purposes of His Incarnation. Since He alone is able to give men the supernatural enlightenment which they need for their salvation, must they not go to Him and ask for the assistance they need? Hence we have that loving, eloquent invitation that is to be heard in the gentlest and most comforting words ever uttered in human speech:

"Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened,
and I will refresh you.
Take up My yoke upon you, and learn of Me,
because I am meek, and humble of heart.
And you shall find rest to your souls,
for My yoke is sweet and My burden light." [89]

These lines have a parallelism that conforms to the rules of Hebrew poetry. Therein we hear the pulsing of the

[88] See the Book of Henoch, 68: 3, 6; Bousset, *Religion des Judentums,* pp. 150 ff.; Schürer, *Geschichte des jüd. Volkes,* 3d ed., II, 160.

[89] Matt. 11: 28–30. St. Luke does not cite these words.

Sacred Heart. It is the only Gospel passage that explicitly mentions that adorable Heart. With what tenderness those words must have been pronounced! They have preserved all their charm and their whole force. Daily they draw to Christ the Comforter thousands of souls bent and crushed under the weight of affliction. In fact, we feel that He who could speak thus was conscious of possessing all that was needed to solace human afflictions. "Come to Me, all," He says.[90] No one is excepted, since there is not a single human creature who, in some way or other, does not share in the flood of sufferings which Adam's sin poured out upon all his posterity. Of the two expressions used by the Savior to designate those sufferings, the second represents them as a heavy, crushing burden.[91] The first [92] gives them an active meaning: they are like fatiguing labor. Whatever their form or nature, Christ promises to solace them.[93]

According to various recent commentators, Jesus had particularly in mind the Pharisaic interpretations of the Jewish Law, and the intolerable weight with which they burdened men's souls. Doubtless He was thinking of these, since they were a terrible and unjust burden laid upon His countrymen. But His view was much wider. It embraced all the ills from which mankind suffers, all the physical and moral pain afflicting it.

Another invitation follows. But does it not contradict the first, since, to those who have just been promised complete relief, it speaks of a yoke to be borne? What is harder than a yoke, whether in a literal or a figurative sense? But Christ here uses this metaphor in the sense often given it in the Biblical East. To undergo "the yoke of the Law," "the yoke of

[90] The Greek text is unusually forcible: Δεῦτε πρὸς μὲ πάντες, "Here, to Me, all."

[91] πεφορτισμένοι (Vulg., *onerati*).

[92] Κοπιῶντες (Vulg., *qui laboratis*).

[93] Ἀναπαύσω ὑμάς; literally: I will put you at rest.

the commandments," "the yoke of God," "the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven," meant, in the language of the rabbis,[94] to obey the Law of Moses, to exactly fulfil the divine will. To bear the yoke of Christ was not to carry His heavy cross, but freely to accept His guidance and teaching, to submit to His commandments; it was to become His obedient and faithful disciple. Moreover, He explains His thought when He adds: "Learn of Me." [95] That no one may hesitate to choose Him as Master, He promises to show Himself ever full of gentleness and humility towards those who docilely join the ranks of His followers: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart." [96] We would dread a haughty or irascible master, and would stay away from him. But in questions of conduct we eagerly accept the guidance of a master whose character and teaching show forth the attractive virtues of humility and meekness. As we learn from the ancient prophecies,[97] such were to be the characteristic virtues of the Messias, and such were indeed the characteristic virtues of Jesus.[98] From this standpoint, what a difference between Him and the Scribes! Whereas His yoke was "sweet and light," theirs was insupportable, as our Lord soon tells them.[99]

The promise, "You shall find rest to your souls," is parallel to, "And I will refresh you." The whole passage is in rhythmic cadence, full of poetry. Christ does not promise to shelter them from the ordinary ills of life. That could not enter into His Messianic plans. What He infallibly and generously

[94] Cf. Allen, *Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew*, p. 124.

[95] Μάθετε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ (Vulg., *discite a me*).

[96] This translation is to-day almost universally adopted in preference to the following: "Learn from Me that I am meek and humble of heart." In the present passage there is no question of the subject-matter of the Savior's teaching, but of the two reasons for placing oneself under His law.

[97] Is. 42:2 f.; Zach. 9:9.

[98] Matt. 12:18–21.

[99] Luke 11:46.

gives to all Christians is rest and peace, in suffering borne with faith and courage—the blessed result of faithful attachment to Him and His teaching. In this sense, His yoke is always sweet; the burden which He places on His followers' shoulders is always light. This is a charming paradox of remarkable truthfulness, as is proved by the experience of many centuries. As St. Augustine says: *"Ubi amatur, non laboratur, aut si laboratur, labor amatur."*

Jesus concludes His address to the seventy-two disciples with further kindly words, felicitating them upon being in the number of those privileged ones to whom His heavenly Father made such sublime revelations.[100] Turning to them, He said: "Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see. For I say to you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them." To some extent they understood how highly favored they were. But our Lord sought to implant more deeply in their minds and hearts the conviction that they had received from Him a unique grace, a singular blessing, since they were judged worthy of such sublime revelations and an office which showed His great confidence in them. We may easily understand that the prophets of Israel who foretold the coming of the Messias, and the kings who eagerly awaited His advent, were desirous of beholding Him with their own eyes and of hearing Him with their own ears. Yet neither David nor Ezechias nor Josias nor Isaias nor Jeremias nor Daniel nor so many others enjoyed that wonderful blessing.

III. The Good Samaritan. Martha and Mary

Some time after the return of the seventy-two disciples, there occurred the simple incident which has given us the

[100] Luke 10: 23 f. St. Matthew (13: 16 f.) also quotes it; but he connects it with the parables of the Kingdom of Heaven.

parable of the Good Samaritan.[101] While Christ was teaching in a certain house, someone seated near Him stood up and asked: "Master ["Rabbi" was the word used], what must I do to possess eternal life?" By these last words, familiar to the Jewish theology of the time, he meant, as we mean, eternal bliss. His attitude was respectful; but the Evangelist lets us know that the questioner had an ulterior motive, namely, to "tempt" the Savior. He hoped, for example, that Christ's reply would express some idea contrary to the accepted traditions; this would furnish grounds for an objection or even an accusation. On a later occasion, the rich young man asks the Master a similar question,[102] but in all sincerity and for a practical purpose, whereas on the lips of the Scribe the query seems to have been chiefly speculative.

When questioned in this way, our Lord was wont to reply by asking another question. In this instance, He asked the Scribe: "What is written in the Law? How readest thou?" Who, better than a Scribe, ought to know what Holy Writ says on this essential point? The answer is given at once, by the quotation of two sacred texts: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." [103] He could not have answered better. On Tuesday of the last week of Christ's mortal life,[104] He also quotes the two commandments of the love of God and the love of neighbor as a perfect summary of the divine will, as expressed in the books of the Old Testament, particularly the Decalogue.[105] To merit eternal life, therefore, we must love God with our whole being, with all our physical, mental, and

[101] Luke 10:25–37.
[102] Matt. 19:16; Mark 10:17; Luke 18:18.
[103] Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18.
[104] Matt. 22:34–40; Mark 12:28–34.
[105] Matt. 22:37–39; Mark 12:30.

moral powers;[106] on the other hand, we must love our neighbor as ourselves. Not only are these two commandments related to each other, they are inseparable.

Jesus answered the Scribe, saying: "Thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live;" that is, thou shalt obtain eternal life. The Scribe had only to put his own reply into practice, in order to attain the desired result. The Savior's answer put an end to the interview. But the Scribe, who wished to engage in a discussion, did not expect so prompt a solution of his "case of conscience." His plan of attack proved to be a failure. He had "to justify himself," to offer an excuse before those present, for having proposed, as difficult and embarrassing, a problem that he himself could have solved without difficulty. To show that he had not questioned in vain, he asks Christ further: "And who is my neighbor?" This was equivalent to saying: How can I love my neighbor if I do not know who he is?

This was evidently a mere pretext. He pretends not to know who were those to whom he should apply the principle which he had so correctly enunciated. Here we have the narrow-minded Jew, refusing to recognize that all men are his brothers in God. At the same time we have the Jewish Scribe, requiring a strict definition on every point. In a general way, it was only to their fellow-countrymen that the Jews applied the name of neighbor, although the text of the Mosaic Law[107] expressly commanded each of them to love strangers "as himself."

Instead of giving a direct answer, our Lord shows the exact meaning of the word "neighbor" by a concrete example. It is one of the most appealing and popular of all the parables.

[106] The Hebrew text of Deuteronomy mentions only heart, soul, and strength. The Septuagint replaces "heart" by "mind." Here the four terms are combined.
[107] Lev. 19:33 f.

He said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who also stripped him and, having wounded him, went away, leaving him half dead."

This tragic setting is remarkably exact in every detail. The plateau on which Jerusalem stands is about sixteen miles from Jericho. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho is an almost constant and rapid descent, the difference in their altitudes being more than 3,000 feet. On leaving Bethania, the road crosses a desolate and uninhabited region,[108] where the bare limestone hills alternate with waterless valleys that are entirely uncultivated and almost without vegetation. Half way to Jericho is the Khan et Hatrur (restored in 1902), which offers a modest shelter to travelers. But there is no other habitation after the so-called "well of the Apostles," located a little below Bethania.

A proverbial ill-fame has at all times attached to this road, on account of the dangers to which pilgrims or ordinary travelers were constantly exposed. Its sharp turns, and the rocks that suddenly jut out here and there, facilitate attack by bandits and their subsequent retreat. These robbers pounce upon the traveler, strip him, beat him, and leave him naked and half-dead, exposed to the burning sun or to the cold, according to the season.[109] Just as this region was infested by the Arabs from beyond the Jordan in St. Jerome's time,[110] so is it to-day by the desert Beduins. In our Lord's day, however, this road could hardly have been so desolate, since of necessity there were frequent relations between Jerusalem and the city of Jericho (then a rather large town), and since

[108] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, IV, viii, 3.

[109] See Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, 2d ed., p. 424; Chauvet and Isambert, *Sinai, Palestine*, pp. 377 ff.; *Guide de la Palestine*, by Professors of Notre-Dame de France, 2d ed., pp. 268–271, etc.

[110] *Comment. in Jer.*, 2:2. In another place St. Jerome (*Nom. Loc. Hebr.*), speaks of a *castellum militum . . . ob auxilium viatorum*, officially built in this same region.

two important highways, one from the north along the Jordan, the other from Peraea, led to this same Jericho, where they communicated with the roads leading to Jerusalem and Judea, to Nablus and Samaria.[111] Nevertheless the perils of the locality were real.

The moral description which forms the essential part of the parable is no less genuine than the description of the external scene.

"And it chanced that a certain priest went down the same way; and seeing him, passed by. In like manner also a Levite, when he was near the place and saw him, passed by.[122] But a certain Samaritan being on his journey, came near him; and seeing him, was moved with compassion. And going up to him, bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine; and setting him upon his own beast, brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two pence and gave to the host and said: Take care of him; and whatsoever thou shalt spend over and above, I, at my return, will repay thee."

What a contrast between the Samaritan's merciful conduct and the cold selfishness of the priest and the Levite! Although the last two passed near the afflicted man and saw him lying on the ground, bleeding and stripped bare, they would not condescend to give him any sign of pity. Yet, according to the text of the parable, he was one of their own countrymen, since he "went down from Jerusalem." The Levite was even more heartless than the priest, for he came near the wounded man,[113] but merely glanced at him and continued on his way to Jericho, where it is probable that numerous members of the Levitical family then resided.[114] The Samaritan, on

[111] See Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible*, pl. 10.

[112] The doubly-compound verb ἀντιπαρῆλθεν, used twice in succession, is most expressive. Literally: he passed by in front (of the wounded man).

[113] Ἐλθών says the Greek text. The Vulgate does not translate this verb.

[114] See Lightfoot, *Horae Hebr. et Talmud., h. l.*

the contrary, although at once observing that he had to do with an avowed enemy of his race,[115] did not for a moment hesitate in rendering prompt assistance, without wondering whether the robbers, who had reduced the wounded man to such a pitiful state, would return and mistreat him in like manner. "He was moved with compassion": before him lay a fellowman in danger of death; that was enough to stir his pity. And his pity was not fruitless, for he immediately acted in a kind and prudent manner. He first bathed the bleeding wounds. With wine and oil he then made a detergent and soothing mixture, which he poured upon the wounds.[116] Having bandaged these, he gently placed the wounded man upon his beast, brought him to the nearest inn,[117] and there made arrangements that the patient should want for nothing until he recovered.[118]

The Divine Master closes this delightful parable by obliging the Scribe, who had expected to embarrass Him, to deduce the moral himself. "Which of these three," He asked, "in thy opinion, was neighbor to him that fell among the robbers?" The question differs somewhat from that which the Scribe had asked when he said: "Who is my neighbor?" Instead of indicating, in theoretical terms, who is the proper object of fraternal charity, Christ here points to the doer of

[115] See Volume I, pp. 103 f.

[116] This remedy was highly prized by the ancients, and is still used under the name of "the Samaritan's balm." Cf. Columella, VII, v, 18; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, XXIX, 9.

[117] It was not a caravansary, where gratuitous lodging was to be had, but no food was furnished; it was really an inn, since the Samaritan had a reckoning to arrange with the inn-keeper.

[118] At first it is surprising to learn that the Samaritan, obliged to continue his journey, left only two *denarii* with the inn-keeper to pay for the further care to be given the wounded man. But the cost of living was not high in Palestine (see Volume I, p. 152), and two *denarii* (about forty cents) was as much as a workman received for two days' pay (Matt. 20:2). The Samaritan probably foresaw that the injured man would speedily recover. And he was known to the inn-keeper and agreed to pay any additional expense that might be incurred, when he should pass that way again.

charity—a more practical matter in the present case. Which of the three looked upon that man as his neighbor and performed the duties of a neighbor towards him? The Scribe answered: "He that showed mercy to him." He might have made a more direct reply by saying simply: The Samaritan. Perhaps national antipathy prompted the form of his answer. At least he clearly paid tribute to the truth. "Go, and do thou in like manner," said the Savior, who throughout His ministry combined the example of charity with its precept so perfectly that He very early received the name of Good Samaritan.[119]

The scene usually called "Martha and Mary" [120] took place in the village of Bethania, situated about two miles from Jerusalem. There, as the Fourth Gospel informs us,[121] lived these two illustrious sisters and their brother Lazarus, who is still more celebrated. Jesus, then, when their guest, was very near the Jewish capital, probably at the time of the feast of Tabernacles, at which He appeared soon after. Moreover, in the Synoptics also we find clear traces of several visits made by our Lord of Jerusalem during His public life.

With a master hand and in a few strokes St. Luke sketches this scene, placing before us a fine psychological study in which Martha and Mary appear with traits quite the same as those which St. John attributes to them. The episode also furnishes a consoling example of the personal friendship which was shown towards the Savior in some of the best families of Palestine. All the circumstances lead us to suppose that Christ was not then honoring the home at Bethania

[119] *E. g.*, by the heresiarch Marcion, in the second century. For no reason except the brilliant coloring of the account, it has sometimes been supposed that the incident at the basis of the parable really took place on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, a short time before. Christ's mind was fertile enough and original enough to make up this little story, as He did all the incidents that adorn His other parables.

[120] Luke 10:38–42.

[121] John 11:1, 18.

by His divine presence for the first time; the dialogue that takes place implies a rather close friendship already established.

Martha, probably the elder sister and mistress of the home, was busily engaged with the many cares of serving, going to and fro, giving orders, doing many things herself,[122] so desirous was she that their revered and beloved Guest, who was perhaps accompanied by several of His disciples, should be worthily entertained. Meanwhile her sister Mary, seated at the Savior's feet in the attitude assumed by disciples before their master,[123] was mindful of nothing but eagerly to hear His words in holy calm and quiet. Her silent homage was intense and deep. Both sisters were wholeheartedly devoted to Christ and honored Him, though each in a different manner, conformable to their individual natures.

Martha, losing patience, with sudden abruptness, stopped[124] before our Lord, saying to Him: "Lord, hast Thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve?" Although the complaint was particularly directed against Mary, yet it fell indirectly also on our Lord, who, by conversing with her, seemed to approve her conduct. The wording of the text[125] indicates that at first Mary had helped her sister in the preparations which so busily engaged her, and had then left her and come to listen to the Savior. Martha's disapproval was all the more keen. Yet she did not venture directly to order Mary to assist her again, but, by way of respect, asks Jesus to intimate this to Mary.

But how mistaken she was in making this selfish appeal to Him! He answered her by saying: "Martha, Martha, thou

[122] The verb περιεσπᾶτο expresses this hurried going back and forth. Literally: "She was drawn from one side to another."

[123] Acts 22:3.

[124] The participle ἐπιστάσα, "standing there," graphically pictures Martha's sudden stopping in front of Christ.

[125] Κατέλιπεν in the aorist (Vulg., *reliquit*).

art careful and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her." The Savior's language is calm, but it bears an imprint of kindly force. The firm and insinuating repetition of Martha's name, the use of two expressions vividly portraying the exaggeration in Martha's outward activity and inner concern,[126] the delicate rebuke of her injustice to Mary, the noble superiority attributed to the latter's conduct, the "one thing necessary" contrasted with the many things uselessly troubling Martha—all these details throw the Master's words into striking relief.

But what is this one necessary thing of which Christ speaks? In early times, as in our own day, commentators have often favored an interpretation that is well-nigh trivial, when they consider our Lord's words as meaning: One dish will be enough.[127] The Savior's remark does not at all refer to the food that was about to be served, but to the conduct of the two sisters towards Him, and to the greater or lesser merit of their way of acting. From the whole account, evidently the one thing necessary is just what Mary was doing, by contrast with Martha's excessive anxiety. It consisted in forgetting external matters that she might listen to Christ, in giving herself unreservedly to Him, adoring Him, loving Him, living only for Him. Martha thought she was acting right by laboring her very best and with all earnestness for the Divine Master; but Mary showed Jesus her devotion in a far more perfect manner. Therefore she is felicitated for having chosen the "good part," as the Greek text says.[128]

[126] Μεριμνᾶς (Vulg., *sollicita es*) indicates extreme, feverish solicitude; θορυβάζῃ or τυρβάζῃ (Vulg., *turbaris*) shows anxiety in her activity.

[127] Various Protestant commentators (*v. g.*, Zahn, *Das Evang. des Lucas ausgelegt*, p. 440) protest energetically against this view.

[128] In this passage the expression evidently has the force of the superlative; hence the *optimam* of the Vulgate.—In some early documents, our Lord's reply to Martha is curiously abridged thus: "Martha, Martha, Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Several recent editions of the

In Martha and Mary, such as they are presented to us in this episode, our great mystical authors see types of the active and the contemplative life. Mary the Carmelite, and Martha the Sister of Charity; Mary who has more than one point of resemblance to the Apostle St. John, Martha the emulator of St. Peter; Martha wishing to give much, Mary opening her soul to receive much from Christ. Their rôles, however diverse, are both fine. To each her part has been assigned by Divine Providence. They supplement each other; Martha's active hand, joined to Mary's quiet and loving heart, has produced countless marvels in the Church and society. Although Mary's part possesses something more heavenly, yet under ordinary circumstances the best result comes from uniting the natures of Martha and Mary.[129]

Greek text give preference to this abbreviated reading. But they are not justified in doing so, for against it are most of the manuscripts, the Vulgate, and other authorities besides.

[129] Fillion, *L'Evangile de S. Luc*, p. 215.

CHAPTER II

Christ's Visit to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles

For the whole episode of Christ's visit to Jerusalem at the feast of Tabernacles, we have only St. John for our guide;[130] and an excellent guide he is. So dramatic is his account that it is evident that it was written by an eyewitness of the events described. "The divisions, the doubts, the hopes, the jealousies, and the casuistry of the Jews are vividly portrayed. We see the mass of the populace, especially those who have come up from Galilee, swaying to and fro, hardly knowing which way to turn, inclined to believe, but held back by the more sophisticated citizens of the metropolis. These meanwhile apply the fragments of rabbinical learning at their command in order to test the claims of the new prophet. In the background looms the dark shadow of the hierarchy, entrenched behind its prejudices and refusing to hear the cause it has already prejudged,"[131] and preparing for a decisive act against Christ. Our Lord is almost always interrupted whenever He attempts to speak. It seems that at Jerusalem He is no longer treated with the same respect as formerly. Those interruptions do at least show with what interest and attention He was listened to. Amidst this varied and active scene, His divine features are more than ever resplendent with majesty and goodness.

[130] John 7:9–10:21.

[131] Plummer, *The Gospel according to St. John, with Notes and Introduction*, p. 167.

1. Jesus Arrives at Jerusalem and Begins to Preach

The very first lines of the narrative inform us to what an extent men's minds were occupied with the thought of the Savior, amidst that varied multitude which had come to Jerusalem from every region of Palestine and from all the provinces of the Roman Empire. Although the celebration of the feast of Tabernacles was already in progress for some days, He had not yet appeared. All, both friends and foes, were looking for Him. All were speaking of Him and asking one another: "Where is He?" The multitude engaged in lively discussion about Him. As usually happens in such cases, the people's opinion was not unanimous. "Some said: He is a good man. And others said: No, but He seduceth the people." However, according to a significant remark of the Evangelist, no one dared speak of Him freely and openly, for fear of the official authorities, who terrorized the people in religious matters.

Toward the middle of the feast, probably on the fourth day, Christ appeared in the portico of the Temple.[132] He was immediately surrounded by a crowd of people, and began to speak. For some time He was listened to in respectful silence. Many of His hearers, with unfriendly feelings toward Him, were unable to hide their astonishment. They said: "Whence doth He come by such learning,[133] since He hath not studied?" They meant that He had not received any advanced education, especially that He had not attended the rabbis' lectures at the Jerusalem academy, as St. Paul did. He had not been, to use the ordinary phrase of the time, "a disciple of the wise men."

Our Lord Himself answered this query in a discourse of which we doubtless possess only a summary—a discourse fre-

[132] John 7: 14 f.

[133] Literally, in the Greek text: "How does He know the letters (τὰ γράμματα)?"

quently interrupted by objections from the audience.[134] Therein He develops these three thoughts: My teaching comes from God; My conduct is irreproachable; My person is divine. In the following words He justifies His teaching:

"My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me. If any man will do the will of Him, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself. He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, he is true, and there is no injustice in him."

The people had asked one another what was the source of His wonderful knowledge. He reveals it clearly by using a paradoxical manner of speech, such as He commonly adopted to inculcate His thoughts more deeply. His doctrine is indeed His, for He derived it from no human teacher. Yet, in a sense, it is not His, since it comes from God, who found in Him the most perfect disciple. He shows the heavenly origin of His teaching by the evidence of a twofold testimony. There is, first, the internal criterion: whoever sincerely does the will of God, will receive the grace of interior enlightenment enabling him to pass judgment on His doctrine and to recognize its source. There is also the external criterion, the preacher's holiness. Judged by either criterion, Christ's teaching was evidently divine.

After this defense of His teaching, the Savior justified a special point of His conduct, which on an earlier occasion at Jerusalem led to His being violently reproached by the Jewish authorities. He had miraculously cured a paralytic on a Sabbath day. The memory of this deed, which many had considered a grievous transgression, remained vivid in the capital.[135] Jesus thought it well to justify Himself in this matter, although He had done so at some length at the time. Taking the offensive, He said to those of His enemies who formed

[134] John 7: 16–29.
[135] Cf. John 5: 1–47.

part of the audience: "Did not Moses give you the Law? And yet none of you keepeth the Law." This was only too true: although the Mosaic Law, laden with a thousand practices which made its performance very burdensome, was then obeyed according to the letter, its spirit was generally disregarded.

Jesus asked: "Why seek you to kill Me?" From the midst of the crowd a voice was raised, saying rudely: "Thou hast a devil; who seeketh to kill Thee?" Those who spoke thus evidently did not understand the situation. They were pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast. By the words "Thou hast a devil" they did not mean that Christ was really a demoniac, but that, in thinking that His life was being sought, He must be obsessed by a fixed idea, produced by some evil spirit.

The Savior goes straight to the chief point, saying:

"One work I have done; and you all wonder. Therefore, Moses gave you circumcision (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers), and on the Sabbath day you circumcise a man. If a man receive circumcision on the Sabbath day, that the Law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry at Me because I have healed the whole man on the Sabbath day? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge just judgment."

The argument was unanswerable. Our Lord might have added that the cure performed by Him consisted of a brilliant miracle. He chose rather to remind His adversaries that the Law itself sometimes authorized the violation of the Sabbath rest. Thus, the sacred rite of circumcision must be administered on the eighth day after birth, even should that day be a Sabbath. "Circumcision drives out the Sabbath," said a rabbinical proverb.[136] Christ had also the right to restore

[136] Wünche, *Beiträge . . .*, p. 525.

health to a sick man, without violating the holiness of the day consecrated to God.

Some inhabitants of Jerusalem, knowing the hostility of their spiritual leaders toward Jesus, then made this remark, which is in contrast with the words of the pilgrims from outside Jerusalem: "Is not this He whom they seek to kill? And behold, He speaketh openly, and they say nothing to Him. Have the rulers known for a truth that this is the Christ? But we know this man, whence He is. But when the Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is." They were curiously mistaken in supposing that the views of the religious rulers were favorable to Jesus. They fell into another error about the coming of the Messias. Hardly could they have failed to know that the liberator of Israel must belong to the family of David and must be born at Bethlehem, as the prophets had foretold.[137] But this prophecy had been embellished by legend; it was claimed that, after His birth in the city of David, the Christ would hide in some secret place until the day when He would suddenly appear and place Himself at the head of His people.[138]

This error Jesus uses as a point of transition, once more to show His true origin. The Evangelist says: "Jesus therefore cried out in the Temple, teaching and saying: You both know Me, and you know whence I am. And I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom you know not. I know Him because I am from Him, and He hath sent Me." [139] Christ thus proclaims His origin briefly but with perfect clearness. The style is rapid and marked with feeling. His questioners claim they know Him. He has no wish to argue with them about this point. Forcefully He declares what is His nature and office. According to St. Paul's phrase, He is

[137] Cf. Matt. 2:4–6.

[138] The rabbis had spread this belief. Cf. Wünche, *op. cit.*, p. 256. St. Justin mentions it in his *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 8.

[139] John 7:28 f.

"the Apostle," [140] the great envoy of God. And, more than that, He partakes of the divine nature, as is indicated by the expressive words, "I am from Him," which are equivalent to saying: I am His Son; from all eternity He has begotten Me.

The rulers were angered at hearing Him speak thus before a large multitude. And they tried to seize Him, that they might condemn Him to death. But "no man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come." Again the Evangelist acquaints us with the divine plan, which effectively protected Christ against all human attacks, until the hour for its fulfilment should arrive.[141] Not only were the Savior's enemies at that time unable to carry out their criminal designs against Him; Providence granted that many of His actual hearers should adhere to Him by faith. Hate increases; but so does love; those two opposite currents repeatedly come to light in the pages of the Fourth Gospel.[142] These new disciples show the chief reason for their full and complete adherence, when they say: "When the Christ cometh [*i. e.,* when He manifests Himself openly as such], shall He do more miracles [143] than these which this man doth?" In these few words they sum up what in theology is called the proof from miracles. Thus do they draw the logical conclusion from the numberless miracles which they knew had been performed by Jesus.[144]

The Pharisees, those bitter enemies of the Divine Master, heard these remarks whispered in the crowd. In concert with the chief priests, they officially sent agents, furnishing them with an order of arrest and authorizing them to seize Jesus as soon as a favorable opportunity offered.[145] This was the first time they undertook a judicial measure against Him.

[140] Heb. 3: 1.
[141] John 7:30.
[142] See Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean,* p. 1.
[143] Literally: "more signs."
[144] John 7: 31.
[145] John 7: 32.

In this passage, as in other places of the Fourth Gospel, the Pharisees and the chief priests stand for the whole Sanhedrin.[146]

Their act did not escape our Lord's knowledge. It awoke in Him the recollection of His approaching death and led Him to utter these memorable words, full of menace for the unbelieving Jews: "Yet a little while I am with you; and then I go to Him that sent Me. You shall seek Me and shall not find Me; and where I am, thither you cannot come." [147] Therefore He will soon go away; [148] He does not expressly say whither, but it is easy for us to understand from the words "to Him that sent Me." In a few months, soon after His death, He would rejoin His Father in Heaven. At that time those who are now seeking Him to put Him to death, would again seek Him, but in a different manner and for a different purpose. Under the blows of divine chastisement, they would try to find Him as an intercessor and savior. But it would be too late, for between them and Him will be an impassable gulf, unless they be converted and recognize Him as the Messias. Unhappily for them, they will die in their impenitence.

As may be surmised, this language was too deep to be grasped by those whom it concerned. They passed evil and sarcastic remarks to one another about Him, saying: "Whither will He go, that we shall not find Him? Will He go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? What is this saying that He hath said: You shall seek Me, and shall not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come?" [149] As we

[146] The Pharisees are mentioned in place of the Scribes; there is no mention of the ancients or notables.

[147] John 7:33 f.

[148] The use of the present tense, ὑπάγω (Vulg., *vado*), ὅπου εἰμί (Vulg., *ubi sum*), "there where I am," shows the nearness and certainty of the announced events.

[149] John 7:35 f.

explained in the first volume of this work,[150] large Jewish colonies were at that time located here and there throughout the Roman Empire, and their fellow-Jews of Palestine spoke of them as the "Dispersion." [151] With this idea as a starting-point, the Savior's enemies distorted His words, maliciously and foolishly supposing He meant that, since His teaching was rejected in Palestine, He would go to preach first to the Jews scattered in the provinces of the Empire, and then to the pagans. It was mere banter; but those who invented it did not suppose they were so nearly speaking the truth. In fact it was thus, in the lands of the "Dispersion," that the gospel was preached a little later by the Apostles, especially by St. Paul, to the Jews in their synagogues, and then to the pagans.

II. Incidents on the Last Day of the Feast

St. John summarizes a discourse [152] delivered by Christ "on the last and great day of the festivity," that is, on the eighth day. We have already spoken of the particularly solemn observance of that day. Standing in one of the Temple courts, Jesus cried out: "If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink. He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." In His conversation with the Samaritan woman [153] and in the discourse in which He promised to institute the Eucharist,[154] He offered Himself as a mystical drink, alone able to satisfy mankind's spiritual thirst. Here He repeats His generous offer with more insistence. To quench one's thirst at this inexhaustible spring, whose cool and pleasant waters flow unceasingly, one had only

[150] Pages 159–162.
[151] In Greek: *διασπορά*. In Latin: *dispersio*. Cf. James 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1, etc.
[152] John 7:37–39.
[153] John 4:14.
[154] John 6:35.

to come to it with dispositions of faith and love. And whosoever thus drinks of it, himself becomes an abundant fountain. As St. Jerome remarks,[155] this figure is the more expressive inasmuch as living water or spring water, which is scarce in Palestine, is especially so at Jerusalem, where ordinarily one must be satisfied with rain water collected in cisterns. Nowhere in the Old Testament do we find the exact words which Christ here cites as a quotation; but the prophecies of Isaias, Ezechiel, Joel, and Zacharias [156] contain many passages that correspond to the thought which our Lord expresses.

"Modern exegetes quite generally hold that this striking figure came to the Savior's mind at that time because a special ceremony of the feast of Tabernacles made its meaning plainer and deeper to His hearers. Every day, at about the hour of the morning sacrifice,[157] a procession set out from the Temple at the sound of music. It accompanied a priest who went to the fountain of Siloe to fill a golden pitcher containing three *logs* (about a quart). The procession returned to the Temple just as the parts of the victim immolated that day were placed on the altar of holocausts. The priest, being greeted by the sacred trumpets, went to the altar and was there joined by another priest, who carried the wine for the libations. Whilst the people shouted enthusiastically, the two pitchers were emptied into two conduits which led to the foot of the altar; then the great Hallel (Psalms 113–118 of the Hebrew text; Vulgate, 112–117) was devoutly chanted. . . . By this libation it was intended to thank God for having on two occasions made water flow from a rock, to satisfy the thirst of His people in the wilderness." [158]

[155] *Comment. in Is.*, 49:14.

[156] Is. 41:18; 44:3; 55:1; 58:11; Ezech. 36:25; 39:28; Joel 2:28; Zach. 14:8.

[157] See Volume I, pp. 244–246.

[158] Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean*, p. 159. Cf. Lightfoot, *Horae hebr. et talm., in h. l.*

The Evangelist notes that the Savior had in mind especially the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon His disciples on the day of the first Christian Pentecost, and constantly afterwards. In fact, adds St. John, "as yet the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." It was part of God's plan that this holy outpouring should take place only after Christ, to whose merits we owe it, should have ascended into Heaven.

Two dramatic scenes then took place: one in the midst of the crowds in the Temple porticos,[159] the other in the midst of the Sanhedrin.[160] These incidents show how vast an impression the person of Christ produced. They likewise reveal that the Jews were divided by a great diversity of opinion about Him.

The multitude had been vividly impressed by the words they heard from His lips from the time He appeared in the Temple. Therefore, in the groups that formed after He ceased speaking, views were exchanged a little more freely than on the first day. As happened some time before,[161] several said: "This is the prophet indeed." This referred to the prophet whom God had promised to Moses and who was mistakenly supposed to be different from the Messias. There were others in the crowd whose faith in Jesus was complete. "This is the Christ," they eagerly exclaimed. A third category remained undecided, and formulated an objection which seemed to them very serious: "Doth the Christ come out of Galilee? Doth not the Scripture say: That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the town where David was?" They knew that Jesus had lived in Galilee from childhood, and they concluded that He was born there. This supposition at once destroyed the hypothesis that He could be the Messias, since, according to the divine prophecies, the Messias must be born

[159] John 7: 40–44.
[160] John 7: 45–53.
[161] John 6: 14.

at Bethlehem and must belong to the family of David. As a consequence of these contradictory opinions, there resulted, says the Evangelist, "a dissension," that is, a profound division among those present, each one holding to his own view. Several were even so opposed to Jesus that they thought of seizing Him of their own accord and delivering Him up to the Sanhedrin. However, they did not dare carry out their sinister plan.

There was a division about Jesus also among the members of the Great Council, although most of them were openly hostile. It became clearly manifested when the officers, sent by the chief priests and Pharisees to seize our Lord, returned without having succeeded in doing so. "Why have you not brought Him?" they were rudely asked. In this question we can detect the bitterness of disappointment. Those lowly subordinates, honest at bottom, who had occasion to hear the Savior's words and to observe His conduct, while standing near Him and waiting for the favorable moment to arrest Him, answered their masters: "Never did man speak like this man."

In this simple remark we have one of the most delicate praises that have been uttered of our Lord. His eloquence and holiness, His gentleness and other virtues had quickly won those common and untutored minds, which had been unable to resist so powerful an influence. The members of the Sanhedrin, impelled by pride and anger, replied: "Are you also seduced? Hath any one of the rulers believed in Him, or of the Pharisees? But this multitude, that knoweth not the Law, are accursed." Contempt for the common people and malicious passion transpire in this language. The Talmud gives us the same idea of these Pharisees and Scribes, who called themselves "a holy people," in contrast to the vile "people of the soil," who, they said, were only abomination and "vermin." [162]

[162] See Lightfoot, *op. cit., h. l.;* Wünsche, *Beiträge,* pp. 527 f.; Schürer, *Ge-*

Thus is it they considered the mass of their own race, of the theocratic nation.

Nicodemus, a member of the Great Council, who, at the beginning of Christ's public career, had come to consult Him,[163] now courageously intervened. The Evangelist recalls that, at the time of that first interview with the Savior, he had not dared to present himself openly. In the present instance, though not yet avowedly assuming the attitude of a disciple, he openly protested and reminded his colleagues, who were misled by hatred, of the claims of justice. His language, while calm and moderate, was energetic. "Doth our law," said he, "judge any man, unless it first hear him, and know what he doth?" The Mosaic Law was explicit on this point,[164] which moreover constituted a universally recognized principle of justice. The blow went home, as appears from the Sanhedrists' angry retort: "Art thou also a Galilean? Search the Scriptures and see that out of Galilee a prophet riseth not." Instead of replying to Nicodemus' argument, they take refuge in abuse. The epithet "Galilean," which they cast at Nicodemus, was, to their thinking, the height of insult. The reader knows [165] that the Galileans were at that time, especially in Judea, the object of constant jokes, owing to the low esteem in which they were held. The rabbis even asserted that "every Galilean is a dolt." [166] Furthermore, as it was supposed that Christ was a native of Galilee and as most of His chief disciples were Galileans, it may be that they were called Galileans by way of contempt. Nicodemus' fellow-councillors, after offering him insult, thought to add a semblance of proof by asserting that Galilee had never produced any prophet. But this statement

schichte des jüd. Volkes, 4th ed., II, 396–403; *Revue des Études Juives,* Vol. XIII (1886), pp. 33 f.

[163] John 3:1–21.

[164] Ex. 23:1; Deut. 1:16 f.

[165] See Volume I, pp. 107 f.

[166] Neubauer, *Géographie du Talmud,* pp. 183 f.

showed their ignorance, or at least their error, caused by the fanaticism which blinded them; for Jonas was certainly a Galilean.[167] It is also possible that the town of El Kosh, the birthplace of Nahum,[168] was part of Galilee, as St. Jerome surmised.

The account ends with these words: "And every man returned to his own house." This is another way of saying that the members of the Sanhedrin, embarrassed by Nicodemus' just remark, were obliged, despite their anger, to adjourn the meeting without coming to any final decision. It was a humiliating defeat for them.

Before considering the incident of the woman taken in adultery, we must devote a few lines to the much disputed question of its authenticity. It is omitted by nearly all the manuscripts of the highest standing, by most of the Greek Fathers, and by several early translations. In the Greek manuscripts that contain it, it is to be found in very different places, and the text has been subject to numerous variants. For these weighty reasons, many modern critics and interpreters, belonging to all parties, consider the passage a late insertion. But those who favor its authenticity are not without arguments. They allege that the disputed text [169] is guaranteed by a considerable number of other Greek manuscripts belonging to a generally later date, by the Vulgate, and by other ancient versions, and by the Fathers of the Western Church. St. Jerome not only mentions the story of the woman taken in adultery, but says that, in his time, it was to be found in many Greek and Latin manuscripts.[170] St. Ambrose [171] and St. Augustine [172] tell us that this detail was purposely eliminated

[167] See 4 Kings 14:25.
[168] Nah. 1:1.
[169] John 7:53—8:11.
[170] *Adv. Pelag.*, II, 17.
[171] *Epist.*, XXVI, 2.
[172] *De Adulter. Conjug.*, II, 7.

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from many Gospel documents for fear that unbelievers, the ignorant, or the weak would misuse it either to attack Christian moral teaching or to sin.

Renan generally does not allow himself to be greatly inconvenienced by questions of authenticity. But, after weighing the pros and cons of this exegetical problem, he solves it as follows: "The account of the woman taken in adultery leaves room for great critical doubts. . . . I believe, however, that it constituted part of the primitive text. The topographical data of verses 1 and 2 are correct. There is nothing in the fragment which is out of harmony with the style of the Fourth Gospel. I think it is by reason of a misplaced scruple which originated in the minds of some false rigorists as to the apparent moral laxity of the episode, that would make one eliminate these lines which, in view of their beauty, might be saved by attaching them to other parts of the Gospel texts. . . . At all events, we can much more readily comprehend why such a passage should have been abridged rather than enlarged." [173] Besides this view of Renan, a no less striking fact is that most of those who reject the authenticity of the passage, maintain the historical character of the account. "It is a fragment of the Apostolic tradition. . . ." [174] It bears the seal of intrinsic truth and offers not the least trace of a late invention. . . ." [175] It is a pearl of the early tradition." [176]

[173] Renan, *Vie de Jésus,* 13th ed., pp. 500 f. The reasons pro and con will be found developed in Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean,* pp. 163–166. In favor of the authenticity of the passage, see also Cornely, *Introd. Specialis in Libros N. T.,* 2d ed., p. 233; Knabenbauer, *Comment. in Evangel. S. Joannis,* 2d ed., I, 271–273; Schanz, *Commentar über das Evangelium des heil. Johannes,* I, 322–330; Lepin, *La Valeur Historique du IV^e Évangile,* II, 62–68. Against the authenticity, see Westcott and Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek,* II, 82–88; T. Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Johannes,* pp. 712–718.

[174] Keil, *Commentar über das Evangel. des Johannes,* p. 318.

[175] B. Weiss-Meyer, *Comment. in h. l.*

[176] Heitmüller, *Die Schriften des N. T.,* II, 2d part, p. 253. Likewise Loisy, *Le Quatrième Évangile,* p. 534: "This is a well-authenticated piece of the Gospel tradition."

Upon leaving the Temple courts, Christ went to the Mount of Olives, probably to spend the night there in some olive orchard, as He did on the last days of His life.[177] Early the next morning He returned to the sacred precincts of the Temple; there He was usually to be seen, praying or teaching, during the greater part of His visit to Jerusalem. The people soon gathered around Him to drink in His words, which they never tired listening to. Having sat down, He began one of those homilies—we might say, one of those lofty yet familiar conversations in which the hearers did not hesitate to take part. But an unexpected and sad incident almost immediately interrupted His preaching on this occasion. A noisy group of Scribes and Pharisees suddenly arrived before Him, leading a woman who had just been surprised in the act of adultery, *flagrante delicto*. In front of the Savior and in the midst of the audience surrounding Him, they placed this unfortunate, confused, affrighted woman. Then they said to our Lord: "Master, this woman was even now taken in adultery. Now Moses in the Law commanded us to stone such a one.[178] But what sayest Thou?"

Under an appearance of zeal for the Law, these hypocritical and wicked men were laying a barely concealed snare for Christ. They supposed that He, whom they sarcastically called a friend of sinners and publicans, would show Himself indulgent towards the guilty woman; in that case they would accuse Him of sanctioning the violation of the Law in an essential point.

As He always does in such cases, the Savior avoids the

[177] Luke 21:37; John 18:2.

[178] The two passages of the Mosaic Law to which the accusers allude (Lev. 20:10 and Deut. 22:22) contain no explicit mention of the penalty of stoning as a regular punishment for adultery; it is simply decreed that death shall be the penalty. But from several analogous cases, notably that of an affianced bride who allows herself to be seduced (Lev. 20:2; Deut. 22:23), as also from an explicit text of the prophet Ezechiel (16:40), we may rightly infer that adulterers were stoned among the Jews.

trap and covers His enemies with confusion. His first recourse is to the sometimes so powerful weapon of silence. He was seated at the time. Without uttering a single word by way of reply, He stooped and, with His index finger, traced some marks on the paving stones. This action, seeming to indicate that He was absorbed in His own thoughts, showed His bold questioners that He was wholly unconcerned with the problem that had been raised by them. It has often been asked what He wrote on the ground; but that is a futile question. It is probable that He wrote nothing definite. It was the act that counted, rather than what was written. As the accusers, unwilling to lose so good an opportunity to discredit Him, persisted in their questioning, He sat up and said to them: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Then, bending over, He again began to write on the ground.

The Mosaic Law required that the accusers whose testimony had contributed to bring about a sentence of death, should assume the whole responsibility by casting the first stone at the condemned person.[179] It was to this prescription that Christ alluded. His simple, natural answer, to which there was no reply, completely defeated His enemies' wile. To the Law it left its full authority, and at the same time it reminded these false zealots that, except in an official capacity or under special circumstances, whoever is conscious of personal guilt has no right to condemn his neighbor. That function is the duty of constituted authority. If the zealots are willing to assume all the consequences of their accusation and to become judges as well as witnesses, let them show it by carrying out the law to the limit.

The blow was a telling one. Immediately after hearing this masterly decision, the Scribes and Pharisees, one after the other, withdrew without saying a word. The eldest gave the

[179] Deut. 13:9; 17:7.

example of this humiliating retreat, for thanks to their experience of life, they were the first to understand that they had strayed into an unpleasant affair and that they would succeed only in further compromising themselves should they persist. After they had gone, our Lord again sat up and turned a look of compassion upon the guilty woman, who was still standing before Him, trembling and humiliated. As though unaware of what had happened, He asked her: "Woman, where are they that accused thee? Hath no man condemned thee?" With an effort she answered: "No man, Lord." Then Christ said: "Neither will I condemn thee." Of course, He abhorred her sin. But why should He pronounce a judicial sentence against her, if such stern judges as the Pharisees had not ventured to do so? He therefore dismissed her with these words of advice: "Go, and now sin no more."

III. Other Discourses of Christ in the Temple. The Embittered Conflict between Him and the Jews

After relating the episode of the woman taken in adultery, St. John says that Jesus again spoke to the Jews.[180] The natural meaning of this expression seems to be that the Master resumed His preaching, which had been momentarily interrupted. Hence we are in the last days of the feast of Tabernacles. According to some commentators, the discourses we are about to consider were not delivered until after the octave of the feast. This view is held on the ground that there is no longer any question of the multitude, which is supposed to have left Jerusalem. But this reasoning is not convincing. The fact that the multitude is not mentioned as previously, is adequately explained by the circumstance that, in this new series of addresses, Christ is speaking more especially to the "Jews," that is, according to St. John's use of the term,

[180] John 8: 12.

to the Pharisees and the spiritual leaders of the people. It matters little, however, for the understanding of His words.

His preaching now becomes more revealing and more forcible than ever. By important testimony regarding His nature and office, the Savior proceeds to manifest Himself both to His friends and foes. The good must have every reason for deciding to believe in Him; and the wicked must have only themselves to blame for their obduracy. The situation is clearly defined, as we see by the contrasted use of the pronouns "I" and "you," which frequently come from our Lord's lips, forming as it were the constant theme of these discourses. He draws a sharp contrast between Himself and His adversaries. The latters' hatred is at first restrained, but finally bursts forth so violently that we see them pick up stones to hurl at Him. As on the preceding days, the Savior's words do not flow in the manner of a continuous discourse. He enunciates successive propositions, which, as previously, give rise to misunderstanding and consequently to objections and explanations.[181] Transitional expressions[182] help us to separate the chief topics of this conversation, which is so full of transcendent thoughts, opening up theological expanses of infinite wealth and superb beauty.

The first part of the discourse[183] warns the Jews that by rejecting Christ they were closing the way of salvation for themselves. Our Lord, who had compared Himself to a spring of living water, now presents Himself under a no less characteristic figure: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The Old Testament foretold that the Messias would be a bright light, shining for Israel and for the whole

[181] Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean*, pp. 167–170.
[182] John 8:20 f., 30 f.
[183] John 8:12–20.

world.[184] St. John, in his sublime prologue,[185] says that Jesus is "the true light, which enlighteneth" this world. The father of John the Baptist spoke of Him as "a rising sun." [186] Simeon called Him "a light to the revelation of the Gentiles." [187] The Talmud [188] says that "the name of Messias is light." And now our Lord gives this name to Himself. What a consciousness of His unique personality He must have had, to use such language! In very truth, with what brilliance the darkness of our poor earth has been illumined by His teaching and virtues and holiness! Although in a general way He is the light of the world, yet He enlightens only those who believe in Him and attach themselves to Him. Blessed are His disciples, for they walk in full and perfect light!

The figure of a spring of living water has been connected with a special ceremony of the feast of Tabernacles. So, too, it is supposed that the figure of the light was suggested to our Lord by another solemn and joyful ceremony that took place on the first evening, perhaps on every evening, of the octave. In the Women's Court [189] there were lighted four enormous candlesticks, fifty cubits (about eighty feet [190]) high, casting a brilliant splendor over the whole city. The priests, Levites, ancients of the people, and a large number of other Israelites held a torch-light procession around these gigantic lights, singing sacred hymns. This ceremony recalled the pillar of fire which showed the Hebrews the way across the wilderness. It also typified the moral enlightenment of the world by Israel, the chosen people of Yahweh.[191]

Among those surrounding our Lord, were some Pharisees,

[184] Is. 9:1 f.; 42:6; 49:6; 51:4, etc.
[185] John 1:4–9.
[186] Luke 1:78.
[187] Luke 2:32.
[188] *Eshah Rabbathi,* 68, 4.
[189] See Volume I, pp. 166 f.
[190] Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* pl. 83, fig. 9.
[191] Is. 2:2.

who insolently broke in upon His speech. "Thou givest testimony of Thyself," they said; "Thy testimony is not true." To these prejudiced men, in whose presence the light was shining, but who demanded an express proof of the sunrise, Christ gives a short but decisive answer. As several popular maxims express it, it is true that generally "no man can be his own guaranty," because "each one is partial to his own profit," [192] and consequently personal testimony in one's own behalf has no juridical value. But the Savior denies that this rule can be applied to Him and proves this by an unanswerable argument:

"Although I give testimony of Myself, My testimony is true; for I know whence I came and whither I go; but you know not whence I come, or whither I go. You judge according to the flesh; I judge not any man. And if I do judge, My judgment is true; because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me."

On a former occasion,[193] by way of a momentary concession, Christ had been willing to acknowledge the usual invalidity of the testimony given by anyone in his own behalf. But in the present instance He claims His true position and, from this loftier standpoint, energetically denies that such a rule is applicable to Him. The proof that it cannot affect Him is that He alone knows the nature of His mission and office; hence no one else is able to say what He is and what He wills. Moreover, His testimony, even when referring to His own person, presents every guaranty of truth and impartiality. There is consequently no reason for distrusting it, whereas the judgment passed upon Him by His adversaries is greatly to be suspected, inasmuch as it is prompted by human considerations, particularly by hatred. Jesus then goes farther and declares that He fulfils the condition laid down by the Law,[194]

[192] From the Talmud.
[193] John 5:31.
[194] Deut. 17:6.

since to His own testimony there is added that of His heavenly Father, so that, in reality, He has two divine persons as witnesses to His assertions.

"Where is Thy Father?" the Jews ask. This was a sarcastic question, showing their unbelief. It was as though they said: Show us this invisible Father, to whom You so often refer us; bring Him before us, and we will admit that You are not Your own sole witness. Jesus replied: "Neither Me do you know, nor My Father; if you did know Me, perhaps you would know My Father also." He thus asserts their culpable ignorance, not only with regard to Himself, but likewise with respect to God, and He indicates the reason why they could not attain to the true knowledge of His Father.

The Evangelist concludes this first portion of the discourse by designating the exact part of the vast Temple area where Christ delivered it. It was "in the treasury," [195] probably in the Women's Court, where boxes, in the form of trumpets, were hung up, intended to receive various sorts of alms; [196] not, however, in the special apartment where they kept the precious objects and large sums of money given or entrusted to the sanctuary.[197] St. John adds, as a sort of refrain,[198] that no one then laid hands upon the Savior, "because His hour was not yet come." His enemies had every chance to seize Him; but Providence was watching.

After a short interruption, the Savior continued speaking, forewarning His adversaries of the grave consequences of their unbelief. "I go," He said to them, "and you shall seek Me, and you shall die in your sin. Whither I go, you cannot come." A short time before,[199] He had uttered these same menacing words and foretold His coming departure. He here

[195] Ἐν τῷ γαζοφυλακίῳ (Vulg., *in gazophylacto*).
[196] Cf. Mark 12:41; Luke 21:2.
[197] See 1 Mach. 14:49; 2 Mach. 3:6, 28; Josephus, *Ant.*, XIX, vi, 1, etc.
[198] Cf. John 7:30.
[199] John 7:33 f.

repeats His prediction with new force. As His enemies will die "in their sin," *i. e.*, in their criminal and inexplicable obduracy, consequently in final impenitence, there could be no salvation for them, unless they should profit by the present time. Their reply is very much like that which we have already heard;[200] but it is even more lacking in sense, for it is a hateful and ridiculous travesty of the Savior's thought. They pretend to think that He is contemplating suicide, and they are not at all disposed to rejoin Him in the abode of the dead. They ask one another: "Will He kill Himself, because He said: Whither I go, you cannot come?"

Disdaining to notice their senseless interruption, Christ merely points out the cause of the profound difference of ideas that exists between them and Him. This He does by means of a double antithesis, which marks the most complete separation; then He repeats His terrible threat: "You are from beneath, I am from above. You are of this world, I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you that you shall die in your sins."[201]

Again they interrupt Him, asking: "Who art Thou?" The first words of His reply are rather obscure. If the Vulgate translation expresses the meaning exactly, we should have one of the sublimest revelations of the Savior, for the expression *"Principium, qui et loquor vobis"* ("[I am] the beginning, who also speak unto you") would be a clear proclamation of Christ's preëxistence, eternity, and divinity. But this interpretation cannot be admitted, because it is not in accord with the original text.[202] Unfortunately the latter is rather difficult to comprehend; and so, in the course of centuries, it

[200] John 7:35 f.

[201] John 8:23 f.

[202] Τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν is most probably the correct reading of the Greek text.

has been given diverse explanations.[203] Our preference is for the two following translations: "[I am] since the beginning, that which I say to you"; or, "[I am] absolutely what I say to you." [204] At Jerusalem, more than in Galilee, Jesus had early manifested Himself as the Messias. Those who were questioning Him had only to appeal to their memory, to recall His former declarations, and they could easily answer their own question.

The Savior then said: "Many things I have to speak and to judge of you. But He that sent Me, is true; and the things I have heard of Him, these same I speak in the world." If He had expressed His full thought concerning them, it would have been to condemn them, so great was their guilt, and in condemning them He would have acted in strict justice, since His judgment would have been entirely in conformity with that of God His Father. The Evangelist himself at this point interrupts his quotation of Christ's words, to insert one of those sorrowful comments that at times escape from his loving heart: "They understood not, that He called God His Father." [205] Instead of seeking to understand, they plunged still deeper into their culpable unbelief.

As Christ declared at the beginning of His public life,[206] and again on this present occasion, He knew that after His death, represented as a "lifting up" on the tree of the cross, many Jews would acknowledge His nature, His dignity, and His close union with God:

"When you shall have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself, but as the

[203] See Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean,* p. 175; Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Johannes ausgelegt,* pp. 405–407.

[204] According to St. John Chrysostom, *Hom., in h. l.:* "Of what use is it to speak to you, since you positively refuse to believe Me?"

[205] According to the Greek: "They knew not that He was speaking to them of the Father."

[206] John 3: 14 f.

Father hath taught Me, these things I speak. And He that sent Me is with Me, and He hath not left Me alone; for I do always the things that please Him." [207]

Note that our Lord never tires repeating that He speaks and acts only according to the will of His Father, who remains constantly and intimately united to Him. The words, "I do always the things that please Him," are particularly expressive, for they indicate the most perfect harmony between Christ and God.

This time the Savior's eloquent words did not remain fruitless. Instead of arousing hatred, they even produced a beginning of faith in a number of His hearers. The Evangelist remarks that "when He spoke these things, many believed in Him." The fact is the more striking since, as St. John tells us, these neophytes belonged to the openly hostile group which is habitually designated in the Fourth Gospel as "the Jews." Jesus offers them a few kindly words of encouragement, saying: "If you continue in My word, you shall be My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." [208] They had but to persevere in the faith, in order to become perfect disciples and to enjoy fully the two great privileges which the Divine Redeemer brought to the world, namely, doctrinal truth and moral freedom. Although there was nothing offensive in Christ's thought or words, yet His kindly promise was taken ill; its meaning was distorted by the pride of those to whom it was addressed. They took great offense at what He said, and replied: "We are the seed of Abraham, and we have never been slaves to any man. How sayest Thou: You shall be free?" [209]

If the fact were not evident from the very text of the Gospel, it would be difficult to believe that this absurd interrup-

[207] John 8:28 f.
[208] John 8:31 f.
[209] John 8:33.

tion came from the Jews who believed. Apropos of the Savior's first miracles in Jerusalem and of the discussions that ensued, St. John had sorrowfully remarked: "Many believed in His name; . . . but Jesus did not trust Himself unto them, for that He knew all men." [210] So, too, those Jews, whose proud and shallow reply we have just heard, had believed under the impulse of a passing emotion. But their faith had no depth; and thus we see it bend and break at the least shock.

As our Lord plainly tells them, when making His thought more precise, in promising them freedom, He had in mind only that moral freedom which one possesses after being liberated from the slavery of sin. Blinded by their national prejudices, these men supposed He was referring to their political liberty, which they asserted they had never lost. They forgot the long centuries of slavery which their ancestors had undergone in Egypt, the still more humiliating oppression of their race by the Philistines and Canaanites, the Babylonian Captivity, the yoke of the Persians and Greeks, and especially that of the Romans, which at that very time weighed so heavily upon them. But it was a principle of the Pharisees that "all the Israelites are a race of kings." [211] And Josephus says that his fellow-Jews "have an inviolable attachment to liberty, and say that God is their only Ruler and Lord." [212]

Christ replied: "Amen, amen I say unto you, that whosover committeth sin, is the servant of sin. Now the servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the son abideth for ever. If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. I know that you are the children of Abraham; but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with My Father; and

[210] John 2:23 f.
[211] *Shabbath*, 67, a.
[212] *Ant.*, XVIII, i, 6.

you do the things that you have seen with your father." [213]

The Savior thus put an end to the misunderstanding which had arisen from their false interpretation of His words. He then declares that He does not deny their privilege. But He quite rightly blames them. For no reason but that of their unbelief, they harbor murderous designs against Him. As He points out the contrast between the son of the house and the slave,[214] so He sets forth, between His Father and theirs, an antithesis which at once becomes a deep and well-deserved humiliation for them.

This time, as they do not yet grasp whither Jesus' words tend, they merely repeat their assertion, saying: "Abraham is our father." He answers them: "If you be the children of Abraham, do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a man who have spoken the truth to you, which I have heard of God. This Abraham did not. You do the works of your father." [215] "Like father, like son," runs a popular proverb. But these men, by their acts, belied their holy origin. Why were they persecuting Him who had committed no wrong, but honestly told them the truth? They are not true sons of Abraham; they have another, essentially evil father, whom they closely resemble.

As they now begin to suspect the trend of Christ's thought, they attempt to ward off the blow by an energetic protest, but fall into another misunderstanding. "We are not born of fornication," they say; "we have one father, even God." Now they raise their claims even to Heaven, and think they have a right to a divine origin. In several Old Testament passages [216] God is, indeed, called their Father; and this He was, in a way, since He had set Israel apart to make it His

[213] John 8:34–38.
[214] Probably alluding to Isaac and Ismael. Cf. Gen. 21:10–21; Gal. 4:22–31.
[215] John 8:39–41.
[216] For example, Deut. 32:6, and Is. 64:8.

special race and had showered marks of His fatherly love and goodness upon it.

But Jesus proceeds, with closely reasoned and irrefutable logic, to destroy this further illusion. His main proof is again the unworthiness of the attitude of the Jews toward Him: if they were the children of God, they would believe in God's envoy; they would love Him, instead of persecuting Him.

"If God were your Father, you would indeed love Me. For I came not of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not know My speech? Because you cannot hear My word. You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and he stood not in the truth, because truth is not in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father thereof. But if I say the truth, you believe Me not. Which of you shall convince Me of sin?" [217]

This whole passage is remarkable. Let us first consider its beginning and end. The second line testifies strongly to the divinity of Christ, who "proceeded" from God, insofar as He is God's only begotten Son. The last line is still more striking, and is justly famous in the history of Christology. It is a challenge which Jesus confidently cast in the face of His adversaries and, notwithstanding the intensity of their hatred, none of them dared accept it, for His holiness was so universally known. In the entire course of history, He alone in the whole world was able to employ such speech in all truth and without contradiction. What He says about Satan, to show that His enemies have him as their father, plainly confirms the details given here and there in the Bible as to the fall of the prince of devils [218] and the sorry part he took with our first parents, as the "father of lies" and as "a mur-

[217] John 8:42–46.
[218] Apoc. 12:7–9; 20:2 f.

derer from the beginning." [219] His children share his murderous tendencies and his antipathy for the truth. This they show by refusing to believe Christ's words and by pursuing Him with their mortal hatred.

To ensnare His enemies in the toils of His reasoning, the Savior says further: "If I say the truth to you, why do you not believe Me? He that is of God, heareth the words of God. Therefore you hear them not, because you are not of God." Having no argument by way of reply, the Jews resort to coarse insults after the manner of vulgar people, saying: "Do not we say well that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" They make bold to liken Him to an avowed enemy detested by their race, and they repeat the absurd and outrageous accusation recently made against Him by other Jews,[220] namely, that He was under a diabolical influence. The Savior replies with divine calmness. Ignoring the first part of the insult, He protests against the latter, because it was more opposed to His holiness. He says: "I have not a devil; but I honor My Father, and you have dishonored Me. But I seek not My own glory; there is one that seeketh and judgeth. Amen, amen I say to you, if any man keep My word, he shall not see death for ever." [221] Since His only care was to promote the glory of God, it was quite evident that He was not under any diabolical influence. His enemies were, therefore, attacking Him unjustly, without provocation. Yet He makes another appeal to their faith, whether by an indirect threat, which shows them His Father ready to take up His defense and to condemn His enemies, or by another infinitely merciful promise—the assurance of eternal life for those who make His word their rule of conduct.

But nothing could be accomplished with those obdurate

[219] Gen. 3: 1–8; Wisdom 2: 23 f.; Rom. 5: 12–14.
[220] John 7: 20.
[221] John 8: 49–51.

hearts and narrow minds that took everything ill. They reply to our Lord: "Now we know that Thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and Thou sayest: If any man keep My word, he shall not taste death for ever. Art Thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? and the prophets are dead. Whom dost Thou make Thyself?" [222] What He was, His own assertion sufficiently indicated. He was the Son of God; hence He had just uttered words contradicted by the experience of all mankind, because ever since the time of creation, no man, not even the greatest and holiest of Jewish history, had escaped death. His adversaries therefore seemingly had the best of it. But, more and more impelled by passion, they too much persisted in giving His promise a meaning which it did not have. Why, instead of becoming angry, did they not ask Him for an explanation, which would not have been denied them?

To their bold question the Savior replies by stressing the justness of His assertions, which were guaranteed by God Himself, and again blaming them for their culpable ignorance. Then He makes another magnificent revelation: "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father that glorifieth Me, of whom you say that He is your God. And you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I shall say that I know Him not, I shall be like to you, a liar. But I do know Him, and do keep His word. Abraham your father rejoiced that he might see My day; he saw it, and was glad." [223]

The Savior's enemies had thought to grant Him a dignity below that of Abraham. But with a word He shows how much He is above Abraham, although that eminent patriarch had been abundantly blessed with divine favors and had become the stock of the theocratic race. The blessed day which Abra-

[222] John 8: 52 f.
[223] John 8: 54–56.

ham had ardently longed to see, was, in the ensemble of its mysteries, the blessed era during which the Messias would appear. Abraham's soul had joyfully projected itself into that glorious period, which was the converging point of the whole Old Testament. His hopes and longings were realized, for the repeated revelations with which God favored him [224] enabled him, to some extent, to behold in advance the future Liberator, who was to spring from his race; and his heart was filled with gladness.[225] He, like the holiest personages of Jewish history, "beholding them [the promises] afar off and saluting them," [226] in spirit joyfully beheld the period of the Messias.

The Jews no longer tried to repress their wrath, which had been mounting ever since the beginning of the conversation. Affecting to understand that Jesus was boasting of having had a personal meeting with Abraham, they angrily cried out: "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham?" Their use of the words "fifty years" was not because Christ then appeared to be that old, nor, as some have thought,[227] because He was that old in reality. They mention this figure simply as a round number, standing for a general average of life and human maturity. Our Lord replied: "Amen, amen I say to you, before Abraham was made, I am." This is another majestic declaration, or rather a divine and decisive affirmation, which, as St. Augustine says,[228] establishes between Jesus and Abraham all the difference that exists between the Creator and the creature, between God

[224] Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18, etc.

[225] It is interesting to note that the Jerusalem Targum (in Gen. chap. 15) and the rabbinical writings suppose that Abraham had visions showing him the entire future of his descendants, including that of the Messias. Cf. Wünsche, *Beiträge . . .*, pp. 535 f.; Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 176.

[226] Heb. 11:13–16.

[227] See Volume II, p. 6, note 26.

[228] *Tractat. in Ioan., h. l.*

and man. The words "I am" [229] are those by which Jehovah revealed Himself and in a way defined Himself to Moses.[230] They clearly express an existence without beginning and without end, consequently a participation in the divinity.

And the Jews thus understood these words. Therefore, regarding Jesus as a blasphemer, they rushed upon Him in their wild rage, intent upon inflicting on Him the punishment which the Mosaic Law enacted for blasphemy, namely, death by stoning.[231] The rebuilding of the Temple, long since begun by King Herod, was far from being completed, and stones were plentiful amid the building material. Some of these the Jews picked up, intending to cast them at our Lord until He should succumb under their blows. But He "hid Himself, and went out of the Temple." It is with these words the Evangelist closes his account. Early interpreters see therein the indication of a miracle, by which Christ made Himself invisible. Following St. John Chrysostom, St. Augustine,[232] and many others, we prefer to take the text literally, and to suppose that the Savior defeated the sinister project of His enemies in a purely natural way by slipping through the crowd and leaving the sacred precincts.

IV. Curing of a Man Born Blind; Allegory of the Good Shepherd [233]

It is impossible to say with certainty whether these two episodes, which are closely connected with each other, took place immediately after the important incident we have just considered, or whether they were separated from it by some

[229] Ἐγὼ εἰμί (Vulg., *ego sum*).
[230] Ex. 3:14: "I am who am."
[231] Lev. 24:16.
[232] *"Tanquam homo a lapidibus fugit."* (*Tractat. in Ioan., h. l.*)
[233] John 9:1–10:21.

interval of time. The former hypothesis is more conformable to the Evangelist's language, for he connects the events by the following words: "And Jesus passing by, saw a man who was blind from his birth."

This blind man, as the whole account leads us to suppose, was probably in his prime. He was seated at some frequented spot in the city, perhaps at one of the outer gates of the Temple,[234] asking alms of the passers-by. The look which Jesus turned upon him must have expressed a feeling of particular sympathy, for it attracted the attention of the disciples accompanying our Lord. They asked Him: "Rabbi, who hath sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?" Probably it was the beggar himself who acquainted them with this sad circumstance of his birth, by proclaiming it aloud to stir people's pity. Such a question by the disciples may well surprise us. According to them, the man's blindness was a consequence of sin. Of this they have no doubt; what they wish to know, what they ask Christ with their customary freedom, is whether the evil came from the parents or from the son. To connect physical evil in a general way with moral fault is in itself not unreasonable, as appears from the condemnation of Adam and Eve after their disobedience,[235] and also from other passages in the Old Testament. In various texts God declares that He would punish the sins of the fathers in the person of the children, unto the third and fourth generation.[236] With what cruel persistence Job's friends aggravated his misfortunes by asserting, in every manner and despite his forceful protests, that he must have merited them by his sins![237] On certain occasions[238]

[234] Cf. Acts 3:2, 10.

[235] Gen. 3:16–19.

[236] Ex. 20:5; 34:7; Deut. 5:9. Cf. Tob. 3:3 f.; Lamentations, 5:7.

[237] The problem of the sufferings of the just man is the subject of several psalms; see especially Ps. 36 and 72.

[238] Matt. 9:2; John 5:14.

Christ Himself seemed to consider several of the diseases cured by Him as punishments of sin. The proverb, "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the teeth of the children are set on edge," had been contested by some of the prophets;[239] yet the popular prejudice continued.[240] Moreover, it is to be found, not only among the Jews of our Lord's time,[241] but among all pagan peoples, and it has given rise to great masterpieces, especially in Greek literature.

There is even more reason for surprise at one part of the disciples' question. How could they suppose that the beggar's personal sins had been the cause of his blindness, since it dated from his birth? It is not likely that they held, as did some Jewish rabbis, that a person can sin in the embryonic state, while still in his mother's womb. Perhaps they surmised that this blind man was punished in advance for the sins that he would commit later. But our Lord tells them they are mistaken; it is not true that physical ailments and sufferings in general are infallibly brought about by personal sins. In fact, although there is a real connection between men's sins and their various afflictions, the links of this chain are not visible to our eyes.

Christ declares the facts of the present case, saying: "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but [his being born blind was] that the works of God should be made manifest in him." In place of the erroneous supposition, He declares a providential purpose, which formed part of the plan which the Savior calls "the works of God" and which it is His office to realize. Those works, in their general extent, represent God's all-powerful and beneficent activity toward mankind, and especially the miracles of the Messias. One of them—that which our Lord had chiefly in mind when He

[239] Jer. 31 : 29 f.; Ezech. 18 : 2–32.
[240] Acts 28 : 4.
[241] *Bereshith rabba*, 34, 12.

uttered these words—was the great prodigy which He was about to perform for the blind man.

Jesus replied: "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, whilst it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Our Lord's metaphorical use of the words "day" and "night" nowise lessens the clearness of His thought. By "day" is meant the few years spent by Him on earth, especially the time of His public life. The "night" symbolizes His approaching death, which will bring Him a well-merited repose. For Him, as for other men, day is the time for work, and He wishes to devote all its moments to the works of His Father.[242] The repetition of His declaration, "I am the light of the world," [243] was a prelude to the cure of the infirm man then seated at His feet. Since Jesus is a source of intellectual and spiritual light, of moral and religious life for the whole world, it will not be difficult for Him to give sight to those eyes that had never yet had the joy of seeing the light.

Our Lord, after these explanations, suddenly, without anyone imploring His mercy for the blind man, spat upon the ground, made a little mud by mixing His saliva with the earth, and with this mud covered the eyes of the beggar. Then He said to him: "Go, wash in the pool of Siloe." On an earlier occasion He had used His saliva in restoring sight to a blind man; [244] but this time His act was more elaborate. In this mysterious ceremony some Fathers are wont to see an act similar to that of God the Creator, when He formed the body of the first man with a little wet clay.[245] This expla-

[242] If the correct reading of the Greek text (John 9:4) is ἡμᾶς, "us," instead of ἔμε (Vulg., *me*) "me," Christ's words would mean that He associated His disciples with Himself in His work for God.

[243] Cf. John 8:12.

[244] Mark 8:23.

[245] Gen. 2:7; Prudentius, *Apoth.*, 689–695; St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Matth., h. l.*, etc.

nation, however, is rather far-fetched. It is more natural to assume that the Savior wished to arouse the blind man's faith and to prepare him for the great miracle which was about to be performed. The act was therefore symbolic; but the most important part of the symbol evidently is connected with the pool, as is indicated by the interpretation which the Evangelist gives to the name "Siloe," for his non-Jewish readers. This word, he says, "is interpreted, Sent." [246] He thus shows a likeness between the pool and Christ, whom the Fourth Gospel frequently speaks of as the one "sent" from God.[247]

The pool of Siloe was famous already in the time of Isaias,[248] who tells us that its waters flowed gently and silently. Thanks to an unbroken tradition, largely owing to the veneration which Jews,[249] Christians, and Mohammedans have cherished for it, its site is beyond dispute. It occupies the place attributed to it by Josephus,[250] the Pilgrim of Bordeaux (A. D. 333), St. Jerome,[251] travelers of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, and all modern Palestinologists. It is situated near the southeast corner of the ramparts of Jerusalem, in the Cedron valley, at the spot where the latter is joined by the Tyropeon valley, almost opposite the

[246] Ἀπεσταλμένος, Vulg., *missus*. In other instances also St. John (1:38, 41; 11:16) translates certain Hebrew words.

[247] John 3:17; 4:34; 5:24, 30, 37; 6:29, 38, 39, 44, 58; 7:16, 18, 28, 29, 33; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; 9:4.

[248] Is. 8:6. He calls it, in Hebrew, *Shiloah*. Nehemias (3:15) gives it the slightly modified name of *Shelah*. The Septuagint and other Greek translations call it Σιλωάμ, as St. John does in this passage (cf. Luke 13:4). Josephus uses also the names Σιλωᾶ and Σιλωάς. The present Arabic name is *Siluan*.

[249] They considered it to be efficacious in removing legal stains. This fact is alluded to by a popular saying: "Even if such or such a one washes in the waters of Siloe . . . , he would not succeed in purifying himself." See Neubauer, *Géographie du Talmud*, p. 145. We have already referred to a ceremonial use of the water during the feast of Tabernacles.

[250] *Bell. Iud.*, V, iv, 1. See also II, xvi, 2; V, vi, 2 and xii, 2; VI, viii, 5.

[251] *Comment. in Matth.*, X.

village which bears the name of Siloe.[252] It forms a four-sided basin about 78 feet long, 16 feet wide, and 16 feet deep. The water in it does not come from the spring which bubbles up within the reservoir itself, but through an underground channel cut in the rock of Mount Ophel and about 1700 feet long, from the Fountain of the Virgin, located farther north in the Cedron valley. This tunnel, discovered in 1886, seems to have been dug by King Ezechias.[253] The water of the pool, more plentiful in the rainy season and scarcer in summer, formerly had the reputation of being sweet and wholesome.[254] Later it became brackish. This is not surprising since, before reaching the pool, it passes through all sorts of rubbish, which destroys its purity. Thither, however, the women of the village of Siluan come every day to replenish their supply of water for household needs.

After the Babylonian Captivity, perhaps in the reign of Herod, a little structure, with a roof of broad slabs, was built over the pool. In the fifth century of our era, a splendid basilica was erected in the same place in memory of the miracle we have just been considering; it was dedicated to Christ the "Illuminator." Well-directed excavations in 1896 brought to light the existence of a church with three naves, which had been remodeled by Emperor Justinian. "This church, having been torn down by the Persians, was never rebuilt. To-day it is completely buried under rubbish heaps, except for a few broken columns which still cover the ground." [255] The pool and its surroundings offer nothing interesting to the eye.

Let us resume the narrative of the great miracle which contributed not a little to increase the renown of the pool of

[252] Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible*, pl. 14 and 15.

[253] Cf. 2 Par. 32:30; Ecclu., 48:19. See Clermont-Ganneau, *Les Tombeaux de David et des Rois de Juda, et le Tunnel Aqueduc de Siloé*, 1897.

[254] Josephus, *Bell. Iud.*, V, iv, 1.

[255] *La Palestine*, by Professors of Notre-Dame de France, 2d ed., p. 201.

Siloe. The blind man's astonishment must have been great when he felt that someone was putting mud on his eyes, as if to add an artificial blindness to his natural infirmity. The Evangelist, who goes straight to the principal detail, evidently abridges his account. We may well suppose that there was a preliminary exchange of a few words between Christ and the beggar, acquainting the latter with the purpose of this singular act. When it was done, the Savior said to him: "Go, wash in the pool of Siloe." Little by little trustfulness was awakened in the blind man's soul; and so without hesitation he obeyed the command of Him who showed such great kindness to him. He had someone lead him to the pool, washed his eyes, and at once received his sight.[256]

Ordinarily the Savior's biographers, after setting forth in broad lines the chief circumstances of His miracles, pass on to another event without delay. In the present case St. John makes an exception to that general practice. With the account we have just read He connects a double investigation, which is of great value for us, because it serves as a control and, so to speak, as a judicial inquiry regarding the miracle. Thus the curing of the man born blind has what St. Paul calls "a cloud of witnesses," who make it indisputable. "How often we hear this wish expressed: If only Christ's miracles had been consigned to some sort of official documents; if only they had been a matter of judicial investigation! Here we have a miracle for which those wishes are fully realized. Official judges, who are also our Lord's avowed enemies, examine it in a repeated inquiry, and are unable to deny its truth. A man who was blind from birth has really received his sight." [257]

The first part of the investigation was conducted by the

[256] The Evangelist's description of the three facts is dramatically set forth in three brief statements: "He went therefore, and washed, and he came seeing."

[257] Tholuck, *Commentar zum Evangelium Johannis,* 5th ed., p. 191. See Vigouroux, *Les Livres Saints et la Critique Rationaliste,* 5th ed., I, 57–61.

blind man's neighbors and friends, as also by persons who had noticed him sitting in the same place begging for a long time past. Upon coming back from the pool, he returned to the place where the Savior had met him, hoping to find his benefactor there; but, not seeing Him, he went home. Then took place the scene which St. John so vividly describes: [258]

"The neighbors, therefore, and they who had seen him before that he was a beggar, said: Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said: This is he. But others said: No, but he is like him. But he said: I am he. They said therefore to him: How were thy eyes opened? He answered: That man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me: Go to the pool of Siloe and wash. And I went, I washed, and I see. And they said to him: Where is He? He saith: I know not."

The doubts about the beggar's identity are not surprising, for his eyes, now illumined, changed the appearance of his face. But he solved the difficulty by his prompt and joyful exclamation: "I am he." The brief account of his cure, as he tells it to those asking him how it occurred, is perfect. Especially to be admired are his triumphant words, *"Abii, lavi et video,"* so well expressing the instantaneous character of the miraculous cure. They have frequently been compared with Caesar's famous message, *"Veni, vidi, vici."* [259] It is noteworthy that the blind man knew our Lord only by name. Cut off from things of the world, he seems not to have concerned himself about Jesus and His activities.

While this first part of the investigation possessed merely a popular character, the second [260] presents a totally different aspect. It is much more important, for, being directed by persons of unquestioned religious authority, it is really an official inquiry. Therefore the Evangelist supplies more complete

[258] John 9: 8–12.
[259] Cfr. Cardinal Wiseman, *Essays on Various Subjects*, I, 203.
[260] John 9: 13–34.

details about it. But he does not forsake his simplicity. The facts themselves speak eloquently. What a contrast between the hatred, the wile, the suppressed and then open violence of the Pharisees, and the calmness, cleverness, and polished sarcasm of the beggar, who, though apparently worsted, really comes off victorious!

The beggar's friends thought it proper to bring him to the Pharisees, that is, to the leaders of the party. In acting thus, they had no sinister intention against Christ, as has sometimes been assumed. In their wonderment at the miracle, they wished to have it verified by those who were generally regarded as the religious guides of the Jewish people. But their step had consequences which they were far from expecting. This cure, like that of the paralytic at Bethesda wrought at an earlier date,[261] took place on a Sabbath. From the Pharisaic point of view, Jesus had again violated the sacred repose. According to the interpretation of the doctors of the Law, to make a little clay with a few drops of saliva was no less forbidden on the Sabbath than to make mortar or bricks. The rabbis even declared that to apply saliva on an ailing eye was sufficient to constitute a grievous transgression.[262] From this circumstance, the situation would presently become remarkably complicated.

The Pharisees subjected the beggar to a preliminary questioning bearing quite naturally at first upon the "how" of his cure. He replied: "He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see." Thereupon a discussion arose among them, as to the person of the miracle-worker. As previously,[263] opinion was divided. Some, basing their view on the fact that there had been a violation of the Sabbath, came to the conclusion that the transgressor could not have a divine mission,

[261] John 5 : 1–9.
[262] Wünsche, *Beiträge*, p. 567.
[263] John 7 : 11 f., 31, 40–44.

and implicitly denied the reality of the miracle. Others, on the contrary, who believed in the miracle, asserted, though rather timidly, that He who had performed it was certainly not a public sinner. The blind man was then asked: "What sayest thou of Him that hath opened thy eyes?" His answer was given promptly. "He is a prophet," he said, inspired by his simple and correct theology. Much earlier, the Samaritan woman had given the same title to our Lord, after His unexpected revelation to her.[264]

But this was not the judgment which the majority of the inquirers wanted. Ignoring for the moment the blind man, from whom they could extract nothing, the Pharisees gave a new turn to their investigation. They summoned before them the beggar's parents and subjected them to a formal questioning. St. John records an interesting abridgment of the process:

"His parents answered them and said: We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. But how he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not. Ask himself; he is of age, let him speak for himself. These things his parents said, because they feared the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed among themselves that if any man should confess Him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore did his parents say: He is of age, ask himself." [265]

The remark made by the Evangelist apropos of the conduct of the blind man's parents, is very instructive.

In his accounts of our Lord's visit to Jerusalem during the festival of Tabernacles, the Evangelist relates several details that show to what an extent the party of the Pharisees crushed the people under the weight of their proud omnipotence. No one was allowed to act contrary to these doctors, or to their

[264] John 4: 19.
[265] John 9: 20–23.

opinions, or even to their antipathies. The threat of a sentence of at least temporary excommunication [266] constantly hung over their opponents. Therefore the beggar's parents, after answering the first two questions, as they could easily do without compromising themselves, maintained a studied reserve about the third, and declined all responsibility, fearing to become an object of annoyance: "He is of age; let him speak for himself."

The Pharisees summoned him a second time, since they had been unable to extract anything from his parents. At first they employed one of their threats of intimidation, to obtain from him an avowal which would have ended the discussion. "Give glory to God," they said to him. "We know that this man is a sinner." In the present case, to give glory to God [267] would have been to declare that the author of the miracle was guilty, since He had violated the Sabbath rest. What judges they were, using violence upon consciences so as to make them agree with their own view! In answer to their "We know," which allowed of no contradiction, the cured man answered, "I know not," and so withstood them to the very end. "If He be a sinner," he replied, "I know not." This is a simple momentary *transeat,* because he did not wish to enter into a theological discussion with these cunning lawyers. Then he firmly continued: "One thing I know: that whereas I was blind, now I see." This was an admirable repartee, marked by delicacy and good sense. The courageous man kept to the undeniable fact of his miraculous cure. On this ground no one could embarrass him. The embarrassment was rather for the Pharisees, who knew not what to say and returned to their very first question: "What did He to thee? How did He open thy eyes?" He answered: "I have told you

[266] On this penalty, see Schürer, *Geschichte des jüd. Volkes,* 4th ed., II, 507, 543.

[267] In the Book of Josue (7:19) we find this expression used as a means of making a stubborn accused person speak.

already, and you have heard; why would you hear it again?" Evidently he was beginning to lose patience. He was tired of all these questions and counter-questions, which always returned to the same point. And he began to perceive the hateful trend of those inquiries, and his honest soul was angered at the wretched game of his questioners. And so he delivers a straight blow at them, saying sarcastically: "Will you also become His disciples?"

Stung to the quick by these words, which they considered a gross insult, they heaped insult upon him who dared to utter them. In their wrath, they said to him: "Be thou His disciple; but we are the disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses. But, as to this man, we know not from whence He is." By mentioning Moses in opposition to Jesus, they intended to point out a contrast that would be crushing for our Lord: Moses was the author of the Law of Sinai; Jesus transgressed that Law openly. And in their own mind, another antithesis was expressed in their contemptuous "Thou" and their haughty "We." But the beggar did not allow himself to be intimidated. With even more biting sarcasm and unanswerable logic, he replied: "Why, herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence He is, and He hath opened my eyes. Now we know that God doth not hear sinners; but if a man be a server of God and doth His will, him He heareth. From the beginning of the world it hath not been heard that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man were of God, He could not do any thing." [268]

Since they argued with him, he too tried argument, and with complete success. His seemingly good-natured manner disguised his terrible thrusts. It would have been difficult for the best theologian more clearly and forcibly to present the

[268] John 9: 30–33.

proof taken from Christ's miracles, demonstrating the divinity of His mission.

Having reached this point, the inquiry could terminate only in a scene of violence on the part of the Pharisees. They angrily replied: "Thou wast wholly born in sins, and dost thou teach us?" Thus do they maintain the proposition implied in the disciples' question at the beginning of the episode and, in their wrath, they cast into the beggar's face his blindness as a sign of grievous sinfulness. But it mattered little to him, now that he had received his sight. To the insult, the Pharisees added the brutal expulsion of him who had dared to answer them so vigorously. "They cast him out," says the Evangelist; and probably they issued a sentence of excommunication against him.

An immense consolation was in store for the beggar, to reward his courageous confession.[269] His divine Benefactor, having restored physical sight to him, enlightens him still more wonderfully by deigning to reveal Himself to him as the Messias, as He had done in the case of the Samaritan woman. Sinners and the humble were His privileged favorites. Having learned of the wicked treatment accorded to him who had become His valiant witness, Jesus finds him and says to him: "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" [270] In surprise he replies: "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" His disposition to believe is admirable. But what would he not be willing to believe from the divinely blessed miracle-worker who had given light to his eyes? Our Lord says: "Thou hast both seen Him; and it is He that talketh with thee." The man who had been born blind cried out with his whole soul: "I believe, Lord." Prostrating himself on the

[269] John 9:35–38.

[270] In many Greek manuscripts we read "Son of Man" in place of "Son of God." The latter reading has much better warrant. Moreover, the title "Son of Man" would hardly have been understood by the beggar.

ground, he adored [271] the Savior as the Son of God and the Messias.

Then, turning toward those who had witnessed this scene, Jesus spoke a few words which were both consoling and threatening: "For judgment I am come into this world; that they who see not, may see; and they who see, may become blind." [272] Our Lord's direct purpose in coming was to enlighten the world and thereby procure salvation for it. But as a large number of men unfortunately refuse to receive the light, their punishment will consist in being blinded by it. Some Pharisees among the hearers understood the allusion and asked Jesus: "Are we also blind?" Would He class these great doctors of Israel among those stricken with blindness in a moral sense? The Savior replied: "If you were blind, you should not have sin; but now you say: We see. Your sin remaineth." Had they belonged to the popular classes which they thoroughly despised [273] and which they berated for ignorance, they would have had some excuse for not believing in Christ's divine mission. But, enlightened by their study of the Law, the Prophets, and Jewish history, they were inexcusable for rejecting the Messias, so perfectly accredited by God, and for treating Him as an enemy, nay, even plotting His destruction. Thereby they did indeed commit the sin against the Holy Ghost, that unpardonable sin "which remains" forever. The case of these voluntarily blind men was, indeed, hopeless.

Continuing the discourse thus begun, our Lord shows, by a most touching allegory, that the Pharisees, despite their claim to be the authentic guides of the Jewish nation in religious matters, were in fact only selfish, mercenary, and even criminal shepherds. By contrast with this sad picture, Christ presents that of the Good Shepherd, namely, Himself.

[271] As in other passages of the Fourth Gospel (cf. John 4:20–23; 12:20), where the verb προσκυνεῖν is used, so also here it means adoration strictly so called.

[272] John 9:39.

[273] Cf. John 7:49.

During all ages there has been unbounded admiration for this page, which is one of the finest gems of the Fourth Gospel. Modern Rationalists cannot help praising it. One of them says: "It possesses an incomparably great loftiness. . . . The figure of the Good Shepherd as here depicted is engraven in deep and ineffaceable lines upon the hearts of the faithful of Christ. It possesses an unspeakable tenderness and delicacy, as also an impressive gravity." [274] The Savior's love for men, His devotedness even to the point of absolute sacrifice, are written in every line. The picture is developed in its smallest details, which are taken with great fidelity from the pastoral customs of the ancient and modern East. And the whole portrait has a luminous brightness: the supreme Shepherd, the assistant shepherds working under His orders, the hired shepherds, the thieves, the predatory wolves, the sheep devoted to him who so lovingly leads, protects, and feeds them —all these details are easy to understand and their interpretation is evident from a mere reading of the allegory. This time Christ is able to speak without being interrupted by His adversaries. In this new scene, all is peace and gentleness.

Before quoting and briefly explaining this passage, we wish to remind the reader that the metaphor which it develops appears often in the writings of the Old Testament. Sometimes the rulers of the Jewish people are compared to good or evil shepherds.[275] Again, Jehovah is regarded as the supreme shepherd of the theocratic race.[276] In the Gospels, aside from this passage, our Lord is represented as a shepherd in several passages in the Synoptics.[277] St. Peter calls Him the "Prince of pastors"; [278] St. Paul says that He is "the

[274] Heitmüller, *Die Schriften des N. T.*, II, 2d part, p. 260.

[275] Jer. 23:1–4; Ezech. 34:1–10; Zach. 11:4–9.

[276] Ps. 22:1–4; 73:1; 77:52; 78:13; 79:2; 94:7; 99:3; Is. 40:11; Jer. 31:10; Ezech. 34:11–16.

[277] Matt. 9:36; 25:32; 18:12; Mark 6:34; 14:27; Luke 15:1–7.

[278] See 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4.

great pastor of the sheep."[279] St. John, in the Apocalypse, pictures Him as leading the nations after the manner of a shepherd.[280] Several of the Apostolic Fathers repeat this figure,[281] which the Christian art of the first centuries again and again introduced into its frescoes, sculptures, and various other sorts of monuments.[282]

The allegory of the Good Shepherd is divided into two parts by a little explanatory formula which the Evangelist inserts between them. The first part[283] describes in a general way the character and conduct of a watchful shepherd devoted to his flock.

"Amen, amen I say to you: He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he hath let out his own sheep, he goeth before them; and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. But a stranger they follow not, but fly from him, because they know not the voice of strangers."

All these details are in keeping with the pastoral customs of Palestine, where sheep form by far the greatest part of the live stock. At night they are gathered in sheepfolds[284] set up in the open air, such as are still to be seen throughout the Biblical East. The sheepfold is a more or less extensive space, surrounded by a wall of unplastered stones or a wooden fence. At the center of the enclosure is ordinarily to be found a small low stable, closed in on only one side, under which the

[279] Heb. 13:20.

[280] Apoc. 2:27; 12:5; 19:15, according to the Greek text.

[281] *Epist. Barnabae*, 5:12; St. Clement, *Epist. I ad Cor.*, 16:1; 44:3; 54:2; 57:2.

[282] F. X. Kraus, *Real-Encyklopädie der christlichen Alterthümer*, II, 588–594.

[283] John 10:1–5.

[284] In the Greek text, αὐλή (Vulg., *ovile*).

sheep can find shelter.[285] There is usually a watchman on guard at the sheepfold, to keep away robbers and wild beasts. Often several flocks, belonging to different owners, are gathered in the evening in the same fold. In the morning, each shepherd comes to take the sheep that are in his care and leads them to their grazing place. Whosoever during the night wishes to enter the fold for a legitimate purpose, enters by the gate, which is opened for him by the watchman. Those who come for the purpose of stealing or slaying the sheep, try to climb noiselessly over the wall.

In our Lord's vivid description, He refers to the ancient and ever new practice[286] of giving each sheep a name suggested by its color, its shape, or some other special feature.[287] It is a peculiar custom of the Orient, for the shepherd, when taking his sheep to pasture, to place himself, not behind the flock, as is done among us, but at its head. The sheep readily follow him. When several flocks are mingled in one fold during the night, each of them separates from the rest upon hearing the voice of its own shepherd.[288]

The Evangelist interrupts the allegory for a moment to insert a remark about the Pharisees who were among our Lord's hearers: "This proverb Jesus spoke to them. But they understood not what He spoke to them." The Greek word which, following our Latin version,[289] we translate by "prov-

[285] Cf. Thomson, *The Land and the Book,* pp. 201 ff.; Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* pl. 30, fig. 6.

[286] Cf. Theocritus, II, 101; IV, 46; Longinus, *Pastoralia,* IV, 26, 38, 78.

[287] A list of such names, though certainly incomplete, taken from the flocks in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, contains forty. See Fonk, *Die Parabeln,* p. 859.

[288] The following is a report based on actual observation: "The shepherd calls from time to time to remind them of his presence. They know his voice and follow on; but, if a stranger call, they stop, lift up their heads in alarm, and, if the call is repeated, they turn and flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers. . . . This is not the fanciful costume of a parable: it is a simple fact." (Thomson, *The Land and the Book,* II, 594.)

[289] Παροιμία (Vulg., *proverbium*). Literally: "a thing that is at the side of the

erb," is a general term, designating the allegory which Christ had just begun. It is not surprising that the Pharisees did not grasp its meaning. How would these proud men have recognized their own portrait in the conduct of common thieves ravaging a sheepfold?

Jesus now emphasized a special point, the gate of the sheepfold, and applying it to Himself, continued:

"Amen, amen I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All others, as many as have come, are thieves and robbers; and the sheep heard them not. I am the door. By Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved; and he shall go in and go out, and shall find pastures. The thief cometh not, but for to steal and to kill and to destroy. I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly." [290]

Christ is the door of the sheep, that is, according to the meaning of the allegory taken as a whole, the door by which the assistant shepherds who work under His orders, lawfully enter to care of the flock. "The thieves and robbers," as was said in the first part of the description, slip into the fold by devious ways, trying to hide their presence; for they have criminal intentions, which the Savior vigorously denounces. Their purpose is robbery, slaughter, and finally the total destruction of the flock. The Good Shepherd, on the contrary, is come—from Heaven to earth, since He is the Son of God made man—expressly to give His sheep true life, a blessed life, life in all that is highest, in all its fulness. What a fine antithesis! As to the malefactors whom our Lord refers to as "all others, as many as have come," they are the Scribes and Pharisees, who had conducted themselves and were still conducting themselves perniciously toward the sheep of the theocratic flock, not as true shepherds.

road"; therefore, in the present instance, figurative or symbolic language. Cf. John 16:25, 29; 2 Pet. 2:22.

[290] John 10:7–10.

The allegory now advances, setting forth a contrast between the real shepherd, to whom the flock belongs, and the mere mercenary. Our Lord again introduces Himself into the picture, and draws attention to two essential qualities which should be found in every shepherd worthy of the name: a spirit of sacrifice and a close knowledge of his sheep.

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But the hireling, and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and flieth; and the wolf catcheth and scattereth the sheep. And the hireling flieth, because he is a hireling; and he hath no care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know mine, and mine know Me. As the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for My sheep. And other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be only one flock [291] and one shepherd." [292]

For the second time the Savior declares that He is the Good Shepherd *par excellence*. The proof by which He justifies this assertion is indisputable. As He repeats again and again,[293] He not only surrounds His sheep with most tender care, but finally gives His life for them, while the selfish and cowardly hireling takes to flight when they are in danger, leaving them defenseless and at the mercy of the wolves, their traditional enemies. The reciprocal acquaintanceship that is promptly established between them and the Good Shepherd is so close that Jesus, in describing it, compares it to the infinitely close relations of a higher order existing between His heavenly Father and Himself. Then, with a look into the future and to far-off regions of the earth, this solicitous Shepherd con-

[291] This is the correct translation of the Greek *ποίμνη*.
[292] John 10: 11–16.
[293] Five times in the short space of verses 11–18.

templates countless other sheep, scattered through the pagan world; the ardent longing of His heart reaches out to them, to give life and salvation to them as well as to the sheep of Judaism. God grant that this desire, this ideal goal, be realized more and more every day, and that all the nations of the earth be one day united under the blessed staff of Christ the Redeemer!

As a fitting conclusion to this sublime allegory, Christ points out the reason why He is ready to sacrifice Himself freely for His flock: by this generous gift of His whole self He will be obeying the commands of His Father and will save mankind. "Therefore doth the Father love Me; because I lay down My life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it away from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. And I have power to lay it down; and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of My Father." [294]

His Father loved Him from all eternity; but, since His Incarnation, His Father did, in a sense, love Him still more, because of His spirit of sacrifice. Two other details are noteworthy: first, the complete freedom with which the Savior gives His life for the salvation of the world,[295] thus fully acquiescing in the divine plan; secondly, His Resurrection, by which He comes forth victoriously from His tomb, to lead a new and more glorious life.

Following this discourse, a discussion, like those disputes which St. John has already related,[296] breaks out among the listeners, who again become divided into two opposite camps. Many of them say: "He hath a devil, and is mad. Why hear you Him?" They belonged to the group hostile to our Lord and were displeased at the attention given His words and the influence which those words exercised over the masses. The

[294] John 10: 17 f.

[295] He again declares this truth at the time of His arrest at Gethsemani (Matt. 26: 53 f.).

[296] John 7: 40–43; 9: 16.

others quite justly reply: "These are not the words of one that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" The reasoning of the latter, resting both on the Savior's preaching and on His miracles, was entirely just. We like to think that they did not stop with this assertion, but that they openly took the side of Jesus, recognizing Him as the Messias.

CHAPTER III

New Series of Lessons Given by Our Lord to His Disciples, the Multitudes, and the Pharisees

We must now turn almost exclusively to St. Luke[297] to learn those events of Christ's life that took place between the feast of Tabernacles and that of Dedication. True, he mentions very few events and most often merely quotes the Divine Master's words; yet he thus fills in a gap that would have been very regrettable. Some of our Lord's parables which St. Luke inserts in his account form a precious treasure. We shall again find about our Savior the three categories of listeners with which we have seen Him in frequent relation during these latter times: first, His Apostles and those of His disciples who were then traveling with Him (for St. Luke continues to represent Him as advancing towards Jerusalem); secondly, His enemies, the Pharisees, who hardly ever left Him, prompted as they were by a more and more violent hate; lastly, the more or less friendly crowds that everywhere came to Him as He passed along.

I. Discourse on Prayer. Anathemas against the Scribes and Pharisees

The Evangelist introduces the first of these episodes by the following words: "It came to pass, that as He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, one of His disciples

[297] The later incidents of this period are recorded further on by St. Matthew and St. Mark, first by themselves alone (Matt. 19:1–12; Mark 10:1–12), then together with St. Luke (Matt. 19:13–20:16; Mark 10:13–31; Luke 18:15–30).

said to Him: Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." [298] Several times already the Evangelists, especially St. Luke,[299] have drawn our attention to those solitary prayers in which Christ delighted. They were a mysterious theandrical act which comforted the Savior's human nature and merited infinite graces for the world.

As to the place where this scene occurred, St. Luke tells us nothing, for that was only a secondary circumstance. But a tradition, vouched for since the beginning of the twelfth century, locates the "certain place" here in question between Jerusalem and Bethania, on the western slope of the Mount of Olives, not far from the summit. There, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the devout Princess de la Tour d'Auvergne erected "a monument, modeled upon the Campo Santo of Pisa. Around a rectangular court are broad galleries; the inner side of the walls is divided into panels whereon the Lord's Prayer is repeated in thirty-five languages." [300] To the east of the cloister, French Carmelites have built a monastery and a chapel. This location fits in perfectly with the previous indications of St. Luke and St. John: the former, just before giving us a second version of the Lord's Prayer, shows us Christ at Bethania in the home of Lazarus' sisters; [301] and St. John at considerable length has given us the chief events of Christ's visit to Jerusalem during the latter part of the feast of Tabernacles.

Let us return to the narrative of the present episode. What the disciple asked of our Lord was a special formula of prayer containing the best abridgment of the supplications which a member of the Kingdom of Heaven could address to God. That which John the Baptist bequeathed to his own dis-

[298] Luke 11:1.

[299] Volume I, p. 464.

[300] *La Palestine*, by Professors of Notre-Dame de France à Jérusalem, 2d ed., p. 210. See also Chauvet and Isambert, *Syrie, Palestine*, p. 314.

[301] Luke 10:38–42.

ciples has not been preserved for us. But we may reasonably suppose that its chief subjects were the near advent of the Messias and the moral dispositions by which one ought to prepare for that coming.

Our Lord received the request with His usual kindliness; slowly and piously He began to recite, in a slightly abridged form,[302] the prayer He had introduced as a model in the Sermon on the Mount.[303] "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation." [304]

As a simple reading of the passage shows, this prayer has only five petitions instead of the seven included in the form recorded by St. Matthew. But the petition, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," is implicitly contained in "Thy kingdom come"; and the prayer, "Deliver us from evil," merely repeats in other terms the petition, "Lead us not into temptation." There is every reason to suppose that neither the Evangelists nor tradition would have dared to lengthen or abridge the Lord's Prayer, which was recited habitually by the faithful, and officially employed in the liturgy at a very early date.[305] This reason also would suffice to prove that our Lord twice repeated this sacred formula, on the two different occasions mentioned by the Evangelists. When explaining the Sermon on the Mount, we considered this prayer in sufficient detail. No other prayer could be more comformable to God's interests and our own. The disciple who questioned our Lord, doubtless had been in His following but a short time, since he was not acquainted with this prayer.

[302] Some Greek manuscripts, which are comparatively recent and of little weight, at this point supplement St. Luke's text by that of St. Matthew. But these additions are apocryphal.

[303] Matt. 6:9–13.

[304] Luke 11:2–4.

[305] F. X. Kraus, *Real-Encyklopädie der christl. Alterthümer,* I, 562.

After thus indicating in what words a Christian can best succeed in touching the fatherly heart of God, Jesus broadens the question, wishing to teach those gathered about Him what conditions were the most apt to render prayer efficacious. On the one hand, there should be a holy courage, which produces perseverance when one is not immediately answered; on the other hand, there should be a full and entire confidence, resting upon God's infinite kindness. The former condition is first expressed by a short and very expressive parable, based on family life.

"Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and shall say to him: Friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine is come off his journey to me, and I have not what to set before him. And he from within should answer and say: "Trouble me not, the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. Yet if he shall continue knocking, I say to you, although he will not rise and give him because he is his friend; yet, because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth." [306]

The suppliant whom this dramatic account places before our eyes could not have presented himself, even at the house of a friend, as the latter tells him, at a more untimely hour. In the middle of the night one hardly disturbs the repose of a whole house to request a small favor. The petitioner knows this quite well and therefore offers an excellent excuse. Even then he at first obtains only a peremptory refusal, which is quite justified on the part of a father who fears that his "little children" [307] will be awakened. Nevertheless, as the friend persists in knocking and asking, the door finally opens before what the Savior so well calls his "impudence." [308]

[306] Luke 11:5–8.
[307] The Greek text uses the diminutive *παιδία*.
[308] *Ἀναιδεία* (Vulg., *improbitas*), the lack of *αἰδῶς*, of "shame."

Jesus Himself deduces the practical conclusion from this charming account. "And I say to you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." [309] The words "and I say to you" show that Jesus was conscious of a superhuman authority, as in the passages of the Sermon on the Mount, where He presents His new legislation in opposition to the Scribes' false interpretations of the Mosaic Law.[310] And what vigor in the three verbs "ask, seek, knock," arranged in climactic order and so well describing the tireless perseverance with which a suppliant should address God when imploring His graces. If persistence in asking can overcome the hardness of men, how much more easily will it succeed in touching the heart of God, one of whose chief attributes is mercy!

The second condition of a prayer worthy of the name is described by another striking comparison, in which the reasoning takes the form of a strong *a fortiori* argument. "Which of you, if he ask his father for bread, will he give him a stone? Or a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he reach him a scorpion? If you then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask Him?" [311]

The phrase "You then being evil," gives added force to this simple reasoning. The scorpion is one of the plagues of the Biblical East. This insect, belonging to the class of Arachnida, has at the tip of its tail a venomous sting with which

[309] Luke 11:9 f. These words of our Lord are to be found also in the Sermon on the Mount. (Cf. Matt. 7:7 f.)

[310] Matt. 5:28, 32, 34, 39, 44.

[311] Luke 11:11–13. Cf. Matt. 7:9–11, where we find the same thought in a somewhat briefer form.

it inflicts severe and sometimes fatal wounds.[312] When it rolls up, it has the shape, though not the color, of an egg, unless Jesus had in mind the large white scorpion, which was not unknown in Syria.[313] We should note that to those who invoke Him with confidence, God in His infinite generosity will grant the most perfect of His gifts, His Holy Spirit.

St. Luke's narrative then brings us to a very different scene. Some time later, a Pharisee invited our Lord to dine [314] at his house, and likewise invited several of his colleagues, Pharisees or doctors of the Law. Jesus, as was His wont, accepted the invitation, for in these meetings He found an occasion to do good. But since, before sitting down at table, He had failed to wash His hands, although the Pharisaism of the time regarded that ablution as indispensable,[315] the host was scandalized. Had he invited Jesus with a sinister purpose, hoping to find in His words or acts some subject for a subsequent attack? It has often been supposed that such was the case, and the supposition is not impossible, although the sacred narrative furnishes no direct grounds for this hypothesis. Nor is there anything to indicate that the host outwardly showed his displeasure.

But our Lord read the depth of his heart and did not give him time to formulate a reproach. He Himself at once seized this opportunity to utter a vigorous denunciation against the whole party of the Pharisees. He mercilessly exposed the hypocrisy of those false guides who deceived His people and led them astray. This king of truth, whose mercy toward repentant sinners was inexhaustible, always showed Himself

[312] Fillion, *Atlas d'Histoire Naturelle de la Bible,* pl. 45, figs. 7 and 10; pl. 62, fig. 4; pl. 67, fig. 4.

[313] Cf. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.,* X, 25; Bochart, *Hierozoicon,* II, 641.

[314] According to the Greek text (ἀριστήσῃ, Vulg., *pranderet*), it was the noonday meal.

[315] See Volume II, pp. 508–510.

inflexible toward falsehood. Hence on that day He did not hesitate to derogate from the ordinary rules of social politeness and to flay the Pharisaic vices in the house and at the table of a Pharisee.

Addressing His host directly, Jesus said to him: "Now you Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter; but your inside is full of rapine and iniquity. Ye fools, did not He that made that which is without, make also that which is within? But yet that which remaineth, give alms; and behold, all things are clean unto you." [316]

These few introductory words refer to the host's inner thoughts. He was shocked at Christ's neglect of the customary ablution before sitting down at table. He, on the contrary, had carefully subjected to scrupulous ablutions the dishes, the platters, the cups, and the other utensils that were on the table. The same ceremony was applied to the very couches, in accordance with the regulations mentioned by St. Mark.[317] With this legal, outward purity, the Savior contrasts the moral stains which rendered the Pharisees' souls displeasing in the sight of God. Was it in irony that He advised these formalists to practice almsgiving as an easy means to which they might turn to wipe out their sins? Many commentators think so. But with the early interpreters, we prefer to consider these words a serious and urgent counsel, which was the more valuable as the Pharisees were generally inclined to avarice.[318] As a fact, the Bible frequently mentions the propitiatory character of almsgiving.[319]

After this rebuke, denouncing especially the Pharisees' hypocrisy, the Savior enters fully into the heart of His subject and utters three terrible maledictions, which fall like thunderbolts upon the head of the guilty:

[316] Luke 11:39–41.
[317] Mark 7:3 f.
[318] Luke 16:14.
[319] Tob. 4:11 f.; Dan. 4:24; 1 Pet. 4:8, etc.

"But woe to you, Pharisees, because you tithe mint and rue and every herb; and pass over judgment and the charity of God. Now these things you ought to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Woe to you, Pharisees, because you love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and salutations in the market-place. Woe to you, because you are as sepulchres that appear not, and men that walk over are not aware." [320]

The first of these anathemas shows us the Pharisees as oddly scrupulous with regard to little extra-legal practices, the while neglecting the essential commandments of the divine law. The second condemns their pride and their ambitious aims. The third, returning to the thought which served as a prelude, reveals the secret vileness which concealed itself under a semblance of virtue.

The tithe, imposed by God as a sacred debt, because it was a tax which He levied upon His people, was justly regarded as an important obligation.[321] The Pharisees, therefore, were right in faithfully submitting to it. But their strictness on this point became ridiculous, when they placed under the commandment whole categories of things that it did not concern: for example, vegetables and even certain medicinal herbs, such as mint and rue.[322] Christ does not criticize this zeal in itself. What was intolerable in His eyes, was the association of these strict observances with culpable liberties regarding very important points of morality and religion.

The most honorable places, particularly in the synagogues, had everywhere to be reserved for these men puffed up with

[320] Luke 11:42–44.

[321] Lev. 27:30–33, etc.

[322] This is the *Ruta graveolens,* a plant belonging to the family of Balsaminaceae. Its stem grows to a height of about 20 or 30 inches. Its bluish green leaves give forth a heavy, disagreeable odor; the blossoms are yellow and corymbose. Rue was greatly esteemed by the ancients, who used it as a seasoning and as a medical remedy. (Cf. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.,* XIX, 8; Hamilton, *La Botanique de la Bible,* p. 102; Fillion, *Atlas d'Histoire Naturelle de la Bible,* pl. 37, figs. 2 and 5.

pride. According to the Talmud, not to give a rabbi the title due him was to offend and anger the divine majesty. The comparison which Jesus, in His third anathema, makes between Pharisees and sepulchres was a most humiliating one for the members of the party. As the Law declared,[323] whoever even unintentionally touched a tomb, became liturgically defiled for eight days. Therefore it was required that every kind of grave be made as apparent as possible,[324] so that passers-by might easily avoid touching them. The Pharisees, in consequence of their hidden vices, were like graves concealed in the grass; they were defiled and they defiled those who had relations with them.

It may be that Christ was about to continue His open denunciation of the Pharisees' faults, when a lawyer, who was among those at table, interrupted Him and said: "Master, in saying these things, Thou reproachest us also." The lawyer was not mistaken, for most of the Scribes were affiliated with the Pharisaic party. He hoped, by his interruption, to end the storm that had broken over the heads of the Pharisees. On the contrary, he drew it upon himself and his fellows. In fact, they too were subjected to three anathemas:

"Woe to you lawyers also, because you load men with burdens which they cannot bear, and you yourselves touch not the packs with one of your fingers. Woe to you who build the monuments of the prophets; and your fathers killed them. Truly you bear witness that you consent to the doings of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their sepulchres. For this cause also the wisdom of God said: I will send to them prophets and apostles; and some of them they will kill and persecute. That the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, who was slain between the

[323] Num. 19: 16.
[324] Cf. Matt. 23: 27 f.

altar and the Temple. Yea, I say to you, It shall be required of this generation. Woe to you lawyers, for you have taken away the key of knowledge; you yourselves have not entered in, and those that were entering in, you have hindered." [325]

What vigorous denunciation in these words! And the saddest fact is that they were but too well deserved. As we have already explained,[326] the lawyers, while claiming to interpret the law in detail, had added to its burdensome commands other prescriptions so numerous as to be unbearable. And these men, so hard and severe toward others, refrained from touching with a finger's tip the heavy burden with which they crushed others.

The irony and paradox became still more cutting when the Savior characterized the conduct of the Scribes, who built magnificent sepulchres to those prophets upon whom their ancestors had laid cruel and sacrilegious hands. In acting thus, says our Lord, they showed their approval of their fathers; therein was a sort of moral complicity, which they plainly assumed. Thus by their conduct would they draw down divine anger and vengeance upon the nation whose spiritual leaders they were. It is by virtue of the moral solidarity between the crimes and the criminals of all times and places, that Jesus speaks of holding His contemporary fellow-countrymen responsible for all the unjust homicides committed since the first days of mankind. According to the common interpretation, Zacharias, "who was slain between the altar and the Temple," was the prophet mentioned in the Second Book of Paralipomenon,[327] cruelly put to death by King Joas. As that book occupied the last place in the Hebrew Bible, the Savior's words thus embraced all the blood that was criminally shed throughout the interval from the murder of Abel to that of Zacharias.

[325] Luke 11:46–52.
[326] Volume I, pp. 177–180.
[327] See 2 Par. 24:20–22.

Moreover, particularly atrocious circumstances were connected with the two murders in question: the former was a fratricide, the latter, a sacrilege. The torrents of blood that covered Palestine less than forty years after this prophecy of Christ, fulfilled it to the letter.

The meaning of the third anathema against the Scribes is obvious. As the Scribes were officially charged with the explanation of the divine Law, they held, by the very fact of their office, the key of religious knowledge, consequently the key of salvation for their fellow-Jews. But instead of opening the door that leads to holiness, and then to Heaven, they kept it closed by their false interpretations and evil example. And so, a severe punishment awaited them.

In a few vigorous strokes of the pen the Evangelist informs us of the immediate result of this crushing denunciation. There was a fresh outbreak of hatred for Jesus on the part of those whose grievous faults He had exposed. When He left the house [328] after the meal, the Pharisees and lawyers followed Him and "began violently to urge Him and to oppress His mouth about many things, lying in wait for Him and seeking to catch something from His mouth, that they might accuse Him." We may surmise what that scene was, and with what success our Lord withstood His enemies.

It was long ago remarked that the maledictions we have just been considering closely resemble those we shall read later in the twenty-third chapter of St. Matthew. As in all similar cases, the exegetes have wondered whether the two Evangelists had in mind two distinct events, or whether one of them may not have transferred the incident from its chronological place, conformable to his special plan or his documents (in the case of the author of the Third Gospel). But in this instance there is no room for question, because St. Luke

[328] This is the reading of the Greek text: ἐξέλθοντος αὐτοῦ, "as He went out." Less exactly, according to the Vulgate: "As He was saying these things to them."

relates both events, and joins St. Matthew and St. Mark [329] apropos of the second series of maledictions, although confining himself to a brief mention of them,[330] to avoid falling into useless repetition. Further, when we reach the second incident in due course, we shall have occasion to point out notable differences between the two episodes.

II. Lessons and Exhortations by Christ

During the dinner to which Christ had been invited, an enormous throng—"the myriads of the crowd," says the Greek text [331] in hyperbole—gathered not far from the Pharisee's house in such numbers that, as St. Luke says, "they trod one upon another," as happened on several former occasions.[332] The gathering of this throng is partly explained by the Savior's presence, which always drew the masses. But the animated discussion that took place following the dinner must have contributed to enlarge the number of spectators. The increasingly evident signs of unfriendliness on the part of Israel's religious leaders toward the Divine Master plainly showed the disciples who accompanied Him that the situation was not without danger to themselves. Jesus, therefore, judged it timely to speak to them in words that would strengthen and encourage them. Nevertheless, as His lessons would be useful to others also, He spoke in the presence of the large mixed audience which Providence had provided for Him.

The first part of this lengthy instruction reflects the sorrowful impression which the Savior was then experiencing. It may be reduced to three thoughts: Beware of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees; do not be alarmed by the persecutions that

[329] Matt. 23:1–36; Mark 12:38–40.
[330] Luke 20:45–47. St. Mark also merely gives a brief indication.
[331] Luke 12:1.
[332] Cf. Mark 1:33; 2:2; 3:9; 6:34.

will be directed against you; remain firm in the faith. Here again we find words that we have already seen in other passages of the Gospels, and we can pass over them rapidly. It is not surprising that Christ should have several times repeated certain especially important admonitions, and it is also possible that some of these sentences are placed in the wrong chronological setting either by tradition or by the sacred writers.

The first lesson is set forth as follows: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; nor hidden, that shall not be known. For whatsoever things you have spoken in darkness, shall be published in the light; and that which you have spoken in the ear in the chambers, shall be preached on the housetops." [333]

Following the second multiplication of loaves, Christ had warned His most intimate disciples against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees,[334] the fatal leaven that threatened to corrupt the whole nation. A day will come—such seems here to be the connection of the thought—when the most hidden designs, the most secret acts, will appear in full light, and the hypocrites will be unmasked. Yet this revelatory publicity, so much to be dreaded by those whom it will cover with shame, will be glorious for Christ's missionaries, for it will loudly proclaim "on the housetops" the truth of their preaching. Hence their success is assured. They here receive an anticipatory promise of complete victory.

The second lesson is thus expressed: "And I say to you, My friends: Be not afraid of them who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you shall fear: fear ye him who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say to you, fear him.

[333] Luke 12:1–3.
[334] Matt. 16:6; Mark 8:15.

Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? Yea, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows." [335]

Many of these lines form part of the instruction previously given to the Apostles by our Lord, in view of their future office.[336] The whole passage overflows with tenderness and delicacy. It is before "friends" that Jesus gently pours out His heart. Their duties will draw down great perils upon their heads; therefore He reassures them again, so far as their own persons are concerned. The persecutors will doubtless be able to put them to death; but such a glorious martyrdom will bring them straight to Heaven. And furthermore they will be the object of God's fatherly protection, for He watches over even His least creatures, and nothing happens to them without His knowledge.[337]

The third lesson is as follows: "I say to you, Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God. But he that shall deny Me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but to him that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven. And when they shall bring you into the synagogues, and to magistrates and powers, be not solicitous how or what you shall answer, or what you shall say; for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what you must say." [338]

Here the Savior's language is marked by gravity and even a just severity. In fact, although the faithful preaching or

[335] Luke 12:4–7.

[336] Matt. 10:28–31.

[337] "Five sparrows for two asses." In Matt. 10:29, we read that Christ said: "Two sparrows for an as," *i.e.*, for about one cent. Obviously there is no contradiction between the two statements.

[338] Luke 12:8–12.

practicing of the gospel assures the preacher of a magnificent reward, yet it likewise exposes him to real dangers, especially if he is guilty of a shameful and easy apostasy, to which Jesus would reply by a rigorous retaliation, forever denying those who deny Him.[339] We have already considered[340] the question of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, the sin which is unpardonable by its very nature. We have also heard the promise of particular help which that Divine Spirit will give Christ's disciples when they have to defend themselves in Jewish or pagan courts. He will powerfully assist them and will be the best of advocates for them.[341]

Our Lord had reached this point in His exhortation when a curious interruption came from the crowd. Someone said to Him: "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." This unknown person thus had recourse publicly to Christ's authority with a view to recover a portion of his inheritance which, it seems, his elder brother was unjustly keeping from him. It is impossible to say just what was the matter in dispute. According to the Jewish civil law, the eldest son had a right to a double portion of his father's estate, with the obligation of supporting his mother and sisters, the latter until their marriage.[342] The speaker had certainly not given much attention to our Lord's words, which were concerned with matters of lofty import, whereas he was thinking only about his material interests. He did not ask the Master to act as arbiter between him and his brother, but of His own motion to solve the pending question—of course, to solve it in his favor.

Although this request testified to a great confidence in His spirit of justice, Christ answered with an explicit refusal:

[339] Cf. Matt. 10:32 f.

[340] Matt. 12:31 f.; Mark 3:29 f.

[341] Matt. 10:19 f.; see also Mark 13:11; Luke 21:14 f.

[342] Deut. 21:17; Selden, *De Successione in Bona*, V, 6; Benzinger, *Lehrbuch der hebr. Archäologie*, I, 348; Schegg, *Biblische Archäologie*, II, 651.

"Man, who hath appointed Me judge or divider over you?" [343] The kingdom He came to found was altogether heavenly in its nature; and so Christ was unwilling to concern Himself with material possessions, except in teaching His disciples that they should use them in a holy manner; nor would He engage in political questions, which were not in His province. However, He takes advantage of this occasion to warn His hearers against undue attachment to wealth. He said: "Take heed, and beware of all covetousness; [344] for a man's life doth not consist in the abundance of things which he possesseth." This amounts to saying that the possession of wealth does not add to the length of a man's life, and that it is not an essential condition of human happiness. This truth He then developed in a parable full of common sense:

"The land of a certain rich man brought forth plenty of fruits. And he thought within himself, saying: What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said: This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and will build greater; and into them will I gather all things that are grown to me, and my goods. And I will say to my soul: Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thy rest; eat, drink, make good cheer. But God said to him: Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee; and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God." [345]

The central figure of this picture is not at all spiritual or lofty; he is worldly to the marrow of his bones. With what satisfaction he contemplates the sudden increase which an

[343] The first of these expressions refers to the judge whose office it is to determine the question in litigation; the second refers to the person who is appointed to make the division of the goods, in accord with the judge's decision.

[344] The word πλεονεξία is significant. It indicates an eager desire to possess more and more, rather than sordid avarice.

[345] Luke 12: 16–21.

unusually abundant harvest adds to his fortune! He was one of those rich men whose covetousness is never gratified. His monologue is sketched with remarkable art and psychology. Gross selfishness colors it throughout.[346] What will this man do? He is embarrassed because his barn and his granaries are actually too small. As St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Basil, and many other interpreters remark, why did he not think of the poor, the widows and orphans, who would have helped him promptly and without expense to store his harvest in a safe place? But he had no thought except for himself. He took delight in imagining his future pleasures, addressing his soul in the language of a veritable Epicurean. But what self-deception and what a terrible ending to his fine dreams! He thought he had arranged everything with great wisdom, and lo, he must suddenly die, without even the consolation of knowing who will inherit his possessions. The moral of all this, says Christ, is that no man ought to hoard selfishly, but all should strive to become rich in God and according to God, by amassing spiritual treasures.

Our Lord then warns His disciples against vain solicitude for the goods of this world. It was to the disciples (as St. Luke expressly says) that He more directly addressed the following admonitions, which, with slight changes, repeat some of the most beautiful sayings of the Sermon on the Mount:[347]

"Therefore I say to you, be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat; nor for your body, what you shall put on. The life is more than the meat, and the body is more than the raiment. Consider the ravens, for they sow not, neither do they reap, neither have they storehouse nor barn, and God feedeth them. How much are you more valuable than they? And which of you, by taking

[346] Especially in the Greek text, where we have the pronoun μου (Vulg., *meos, mea, mihi*) repeated five times.

[347] Compare Luke 12: 22–34 and Matt. 6: 19–33.

thought, can add to his stature one cubit? If then ye be not able to do so much as the least thing, why are you solicitous for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they labor not, neither do they spin. But I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these. Now if God clothe in this manner the grass that is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more you, O ye of little faith? And seek not you what you shall eat or what you shall drink; and be not lifted up on high. For all these things do the nations of the world seek. But your Father knoweth that you have need of these things. But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom." [348]

This last sentence is the only part of the passage that has not its equivalent in the parallel passage of the First Gospel. The words possess a delicate charm. God will not fail to give a place in His kingdom to the humble sheep which then formed the Messias' small flock; meanwhile He will provide for their temporal needs with fatherly care. The arguments by which Christ urges His disciples to free themselves from all inordinate preoccupation and anxiety about food and clothing, are those with which we are already acquainted. And they are presented with the utmost grace and force.

Then, raising His hearers' thoughts to a higher plane, our Lord said: "Sell what you possess and give alms. Make to yourselves bags which grow not old, a treasure in Heaven which faileth not; where no thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." In speaking thus, Jesus counselled the élite of His disciples to practice perfect renunciation, repeating some of the words He had spoken in the Sermon on the Mount.[349] Christians should not be attached beyond measure to worldly pos-

[348] Luke 12: 22–32.
[349] Matt. 6: 19–21.

sessions, but should be ready to sacrifice them for God and in the higher interests of their souls. Heaven is not purchased for a money price; but money, bestowed upon the poor or employed in other good works, helps to merit Heaven.

The Master's words then pass from the present epoch to the great day of His second coming at the end of time, and He urges His disciples to be vigilant and faithful. His language continues to abound in figures after the Oriental fashion:

"Let your loins be girt, and lamps burning in your hands. And you yourselves like to men who wait for their lord, when he shall return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching. Amen I say to you, that he will gird himself and make them sit down to meat, and passing will minister unto them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

"But this know ye, that if the householder did know at what time the thief would come, he would surely watch, and would not suffer his house to be broken open. Be you then also ready; for at what hour you think not, the Son of Man will come."

Several of these admonitions are peculiar to the Third Gospel; but some of them recur in the Savior's eschatological discourse, as recorded by St. Matthew.[350] We have here two little parables; they are very simple and without any historical narrative. The first one[351] describes the conduct of diligent servants, whose master has gone to a wedding and will not return until late at night.[352] The servants have their "loins girt," that is, the lower extremity of their long garments are

[350] Compare Luke 12: 39 f., 42–46, and Matt. 24: 42–50.

[351] Luke 12: 35–38.

[352] On the night "watches" among the Jews of the time, see Volume II, page 483, note 762.

caught up in their girdle, so as not to hinder them when they go about their work. In their hand is a lighted lamp, to give light to their master upon his return, without obliging him to wait. With what kindly attentions he will show his gratitude! At this point the scene ceases to be of earth; for, as Christ says later on,[353] where is the master who rewards his servants, even the most zealous ones, by serving them at table with his own hands?

The second comparison[354] consists in the example of a householder keeping watch so as to surprise and capture the daring robbers who attack at night. Like him, and like the devoted servants who wait for their master, the disciples of Christ should be ever ready to receive Him, since they do not know at what hour He will return.

The Savior had reached this point in His discourse, when Simon Peter interrupted Him to ask: "Lord, dost Thou speak this parable to us [Thy Apostles and intimate disciples], or likewise to all?"[355] that is, to all men without distinction? Jesus had mentioned watchful servants to whom a magnificent reward is promised. Did He not have in mind especially those who for some time had formed His loving and devoted family? The Savior, without answering the Apostle directly, answers the question by a third similitude, that of the two stewards:

"Who, thinkest thou, is the faithful and wise steward, whom his lord setteth over his family, to give them their measure of wheat in due season?[356] Blessed is that servant, whom when his lord shall come, he shall find so doing. Verily, I say to you, he will set him over all that he possesseth. But if that servant shall

[353] Cf. Luke 17:7–10.

[354] Luke 12:39 f.

[355] Luke 12:41.

[356] In ancient times slaves sometimes received the grain apportioned to them for the making of bread, once a week or once a month, instead of each day. (Cf. Horace, *Epist.*, XIV, 40.)

say in his heart: My lord is long a coming; and shall begin to strike the menservants and maidservants, and to eat and to drink and be drunk; the lord of that servant will come in the day that he hopeth not, and at the hour that he knoweth not, and shall separate him, and shall appoint him his portion with unbelievers. And that servant who knew the will of his lord and prepared not himself and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required; and to whom they have committed much, of him they will demand the more." [357]

These words are clear, and the lord's conduct perfectly just. Three degrees are mentioned in the punishment that will be inflicted upon the unfaithful steward, according to the extent of his guilt. Only for a grave criminal negligence will he be "separated," or more exactly, according to the Greek text, cut in two.[358] The final sentence states the lesson to be drawn from the whole similitude and warns true disciples against abusing grace.

Then Jesus, evidently deeply moved, uttered these solemn and somewhat mysterious words: "I am come to cast fire on the earth; and what will I, but that it be kindled? And I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?"

Commentators are not agreed as to the meaning of these words. The two metaphors of fire and baptism partly conceal the thought, even while giving it more force. The second figure seems to have been explained by the Savior when He asked the sons of Zebedee: "Can you drink of the chalice that I drink of; or be baptized with the baptism wherewith I am baptized?" [359] The baptism meant is that of suffering; it will

[357] Luke 12:42–48.

[358] Διχοτομήσει (Vulg., *dividet*). Masters then had the right of life and death over their slaves.

[359] Mark 10:38 f.

be a baptism of blood, the baptism of the sorrowful passion. But in what sense does Christ say that He is "straitened" [360] to see it accomplished? Did He feel an anguish about it, and may it be that we have here what has been called "a prelude of Gethsemani," the instinctive dread of suffering, which Christ's human soul did not escape? It is possible. But it seems preferable to apply this inner urge to the ardent, generous desire with which, as the Redeemer, Jesus hastened to embrace His Passion, on account of the wonderful results which it was to produce for all mankind. As for the fire that He wished to cast upon earth, according to some it is a figure of the holiness and divine love which the Messias had come to kindle on earth; more probably, we think, according to the words that follow, it was a figure of the division that the Christian religion would create in the midst of families, a figure of the persecutions that would soon break out against the Church. "However, the Savior could not directly wish for the persecutions that would be directed against the nascent Church, the lamentable outbreaks of the wars of religion. But He desired them in considering the happy consequences they would produce. Since the strife of evil against good was necessary, and since it was to contribute to the universal spread and the proclamation of His kingdom, He could hardly help wishing that it would embrace the whole world as soon as possible." [361]

Christ explains and supplements His thought by saying:

"Think ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, no; but separation. For there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided: three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against his father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against

[360] In the Greek, *συνέχομαι* (Vulg., *coarctor*).
[361] Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Luc*, p. 249.

the mother, the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." [362]

St. Luke tells us it was for the multitudes that our Lord spoke the next two instructions, both of which contain serious warnings to the Jews of that generation. Our Lord said:

"When you see a cloud rising from the west, presently you say: A shower is coming; and so it happeneth. And when ye see the south wind blow, you say: There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. You hypocrites, you know how to discern the face of the heaven and of the earth; but how is it that you do not discern this time? And why even of yourselves, do you not judge that which is just? And when thou goest with thy adversary to the prince, whilst thou art in the way, endeavor to be delivered from him; lest perhaps he draw thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the exacter, and the exacter cast thee into prison. I say to thee, thou shalt not go out thence until thou pay the very last mite." [363]

The first of these instructions Jesus had already addressed to the Pharisees and Sadducees, who asked Him for a sign from heaven.[364] He here repeats it to the people, who shared the moral blindness of their leaders in the matter of the greatest fact of Jewish history, the coming of the Messias. The second of these instructions we have already seen in the Sermon on the Mount; [365] but in that place it was an exhortation to the practice of fraternal charity, whereas here it urges the hearers to make peace with God as soon as possible, if they do not wish to expose themselves to rigorous and eternal punishments.[366]

[362] Luke 12: 51–53. We have already seen these lines in the First Gospel (Matt. 10: 34 f.).

[363] Luke 12: 54–59.

[364] Matt. 16: 1–4.

[365] Matt. 5: 25 f.

[366] Our Douay Version translates by "mite" the noun λεπτόν (Vulg., *minutum*) of the Greek text. The λεπτόν was half a Roman *quadrans*, equal to one-eighth of

About this time several Jews, who were probably returning from Jerusalem, announced to Jesus that Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, had massacred a number of Galileans in the Temple courts, "whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of the victims they were even then offering in sacrifice"; this circumstance had produced a deep impression on those who witnessed the slaughter. Profane history is entirely silent about this sanguinary incident. But it is in perfect harmony with what we otherwise know of the character of Pilate and the behavior of the Galileans.[367]

It is likely that the outrage took place at the time of one of those uprisings which the impulsive and rebellious Galileans, who bore the heavy yoke of the Romans more impatiently than did the rest of the population of Palestine, undertook at the least occasion. In cases of this sort, the Roman repression was always terrible. Pilate in particular stopped at no violence and had no hesitation in shedding the blood of rebels in torrents.[368] From the Antonia tower, which served as a garrison for the imperial troops and which communicated directly with the Temple courts at the northwest,[369] it was possible instantly to enter the Temple precincts, which could then be easily dominated.

In accordance with the superstitious ideas of the time,[370] those who brought Christ the important news, or those who were then gathered around Him, probably supposed (and many may have openly said so) that the victims of that atrocious outrage must have brought it upon themselves, in conse-

an as, *i. e.*, one-eighth of a cent in our money. The parallel passage in Matt. 5:26 has *quadrans*.

[367] See Volume I, pp. 107, 134 f.

[368] Cf. Josephus, *Ant.*, XVII, ix, 3; XVIII, iii, 1; *Bell. Iud.*, II, iii, 3, and ix, 4; V, i, 5.

[369] *Bell. Iud.*, V, iv, 2; v, 8; Fillion, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible*, pl. 15; *Atlas Archéol.*, p. 120, pl. 97, figs. 1 and 2.

[370] See what is said above on this point, in connection with the cure of the man born blind, p. 70.

quence of some grievous sins. Our Lord at once repeated His protest against this mistaken and often unjust hypothesis. At the same time He drew a moral lesson from the cruel event. "Think you," He said, "that these Galileans were sinners above all the men of Galilee, because they suffered such things? No, I say to you; but unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish."[371] Confining Himself to the spiritual domain and passing no judgment on the governor's conduct, He reminded His hearers that they had all offended God and for this reason were subject to the penalties of His justice, unless they repented and became sincerely converted.[372] If they refuse to do penance, the divine sword will execute in their midst the most dread slaughter. The warning was likewise a prophecy. For not being converted to the voice of their Messias and for not believing in Him, many millions of Jews perished less than forty years later, in Galilee, throughout Palestine, in Jerusalem, even in the Temple.[373]

The Savior made His conclusion the more convincing by reminding those present of another sort of catastrophe, also a recent one, from which He deduces the same lesson: "Or those eighteen upon whom the tower fell in Siloe, and slew them: think you that they also were debtors above all the men that dwelt in Jerusalem? No, I say to you; but except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish." This event we know only through St. Luke. The tower which fell and thus caused so many deaths, evidently went by the name of Siloe because it stood in the vicinity of the famous pool. It may have belonged to the walls of Jerusalem.

Christ wished to impress still more deeply upon His hearers the salutary thought of the necessity of penance and sincere conversion. He developed this idea by a little parable:

[371] Luke 13:2 f.

[372] This is the exact meaning of the verb μετανοῆτε (Vulg., *poenitentiam egeritis*).

[373] Josephus, *Bell. Iud.*, V, i, 3.

"A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the dresser of the vineyard: Behold, for these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree and I find none. Cut it down therefore; why cumbereth it the ground? But he answering, said to him: Lord, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and dung it. And if happily it bear fruit; but if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." [374]

The account stops abruptly with these threatening words, to which the owner of the vineyard can answer nothing, for they are true and just. The setting of this picture is taken from the agricultural practices of Palestine, where, as in other countries, the fig tree has always been planted in the midst of the vines.[375] The meaning of the parable is easily seen. The barren tree, which not only produces no fruit, but occupies ground that it makes unproductive, is the Jewish people of that time, refusing to be converted and to accept the Messias. Our Lord, three days before His death, repeats this comparison, connecting with it an important object-lesson.[376] The owner of the vineyard is God, who consents to grant a reprieve to His guilty nation, but on condition that it put an end to its moral barrenness and bring forth fruit, which its Lord had a right to require of it. The vine-dresser who implores the divine clemency represents Christ the Redeemer, of generous, merciful heart. Woe to the symbolic tree, the object of so much kindness, if it continues to abuse heavenly graces!

Some time after this, Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath,[377] thus bringing His ministry to a close as He had begun it. Throughout His public life we have seen Him on the Sabbath present at the religious services in the syna-

[374] Luke 13:6–9.

[375] Cant. 2:13; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, 12:18. Hence the expression often used in the Bible: "everyone under his vine and under his fig tree."

[376] Matt. 21:18 f.; Mark 11:12–14.

[377] Luke 13:10–17.

gogues, frequently speaking there. Among those present on this particular Sabbath was a woman very deserving of pity; her physical ailment is aptly described by the Evangelist-physician. For eighteen years, owing to a diabolical possession, she had been suffering from a contraction of the muscles of the spinal column, to such an extent that she was bent and unable to stand straight. Her malady, from the physical point of view, had its seat not only at the neck, but in the loins, the back, and the whole spine. The Savior, moved with pity, called her, and placing His hands upon her, said: "Woman, thou art delivered from thy infirmity." The result was instantaneous. The corporal bonds that held the unfortunate woman captive were broken, as also the spiritual bonds with which the devil had encompassed her. Joyfully and without effort she raised her head and all the upper part of her body, which had been bent toward the ground for so long a time. In her gratitude she kept [378] glorifying God before the entire gathering, which marvelled at the miracle.

But this whole scene was a scandal to the ruler of the synagogue—evidently a man imbued with Pharisaic principles. Angry [379] that the cure had been performed on a Sabbath, but not daring to speak words of blame directly to the Miracle-worker, he turned toward the assembled people and made this little pompous, ridiculous, and senseless address: "Six days there are, wherein you ought to work. In them therefore come and be healed; but not on the Sabbath day." By what right did he take the liberty of thus scolding the multitude that did not at all think of entering the synagogue for the purpose of being cured, any more than did the woman who had just miraculously recovered the use of her crippled limbs? In fact, "the whole range of the Gospels does not supply any other instance of an interference so illogical, or a stupidity so hope-

[378] This is indicated by the use of the imperfect tense.
[379] Ἀγανακτῶν (Vulg., *indignans*).

less." [380] This man was narrow and small in mind and heart. The double miracle just performed he regarded as a servile work, as a violation of the Sabbath.

Although the Savior was always so kind, yet He flayed this impudence as it deserved. "Ye hypocrites," He said, "doth not every one of you on the Sabbath day loose his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead them to water? And ought not this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" Jesus spoke in the plural because He knew that many of those present shared the view of the ruler of the synagogue. He quite rightly calls them hypocrites, since they acted contrary to their own avowed pretense, when their personal interests were involved.

He soon had occasion to silence other adversaries by the first of the two arguments, a simple appeal to common sense and experience, contained in His denunciation.[381] The Talmud explicitly mentions the custom to which the Savior alludes. It says that "not only is it lawful to lead an animal on the Sabbath for the purpose of satisfying its thirst, but it is also permissible to draw water for it, provided—a strange distinction, illustrating the Pharisaic spirit—the animal comes to the water and drinks, and that the water is not carried to the animal." [382] The *argumentum ad hominem* is supplemented by an *a fortiori* argument which has even greater force: a daughter of Abraham, in so afflicted a condition, surely deserved to be cured, even on the Sabbath; nay, she "ought" to be released at once, whatever the day.

The reasoning hit the mark. It confounded the ruler of the synagogue and his fellows, who were careful not to reply. The multitude, on the contrary, were in admiration of this miracle,

[380] Farrar, *Life of Jesus*, 23d ed., II, 115.
[381] Luke 14: 5.
[382] *Erubin*, 20, 2.

added to so many others, and rejoiced at all the glorious things the Savior performed, for they well understood, when it was explained to them, what exaggeration there was in such and such prescriptions imposed on them by the Scribes.

III. The Number of the Elect; Herod's Ambushes; Cure of a Man Suffering from Dropsy; Another Series of Important Lessons [383]

After again recalling that Jesus was directing His steps toward Jerusalem,[384] the Evangelist continues to give valuable information about the going and coming of the Divine Master, and to speak of the lessons that came from His lips; for the Savior continued to spread the glad tidings everywhere and on every occasion.

One day—we are not told under what outward circumstances—Jesus was asked: "Lord, are they few that are saved?" Whether coming from a disciple or from some stranger, the question was of merely theoretical significance and only a matter of idle curiosity. Our Lord certainly would have wished it formulated in some such way as this: Lord, what must one do to be saved? But this topic was then a matter of lively concern to a great number of Jews, on account of the excitement caused among them by the expectation of the Messias. An eminent commentator remarks that one of the curious cabalistic attempts of the rabbis consisted in trying to determine the number of the elect by calculating the numerical value of the letters of such or such a Scripture text about the Kingdom of Heaven.[385] An echo of these subtle discussions may be noted in the apocryphal Fourth Book of

[383] Luke 13:22–14:35.

[384] Διεπορεύετο, literally: "He was going through"; therefore making short journeys and often stopping to preach the gospel.

[385] Plumptre, *New Testament Commentary for English Readers,* edited by Ellicott, I, 308.

Esdras: "The Most High made this age [this world] for a great number, and the future age for a small number";[386] "I said before and I say now and I will say later: The number of those who perish exceeds the number of those who will be saved, as much as a wave exceeds a drop."[387]

The Savior replied, not directly, but in a practical way by pointing out to the questioner, and to all His listeners, the path they must follow to attain to salvation. He said to them: "Strive[388] to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter, and shall not be able." In picturesque form He then expanded this figure of the narrow gate, which He had used at greater length in the Sermon on the Mount, with considerable variants:[389]

"When the master of the house shall be gone in and shall shut the door, you shall begin to stand without and knock at the door, saying: Lord, open to us. And he answering, shall say to you: I know you not, whence you are. Then you shall begin to say: We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. And he shall say to you: I know you not, whence you are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And there shall come from the east and the west and the north and the south; and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God. And behold, they are last that shall be first; and they are first that shall be last."[390]

This master of the house, giving a great dinner to a large number of guests, is a figure of God Himself. At the appointed

[386] 4 Esdras 8: 1.
[387] 4 Esdras 9: 15 f.
[388] The verb ἀγωνίζεσθε (Vulg., *contendite*) is very forceful. It supposes vigorous effort, a struggle to overcome obstacles.
[389] Matt. 7: 13 f.
[390] Luke 13: 25–30.

hour, the doors of the banquet hall are thrown open, and the guests hasten to go in. But soon afterwards the doors are closed, and woe to those who are late through their own fault! The time of salvation will have come to a close. They will vainly beat upon the door to have it opened for them; in vain will they try to argue with the master of the house, claiming that they had enjoyed close personal relations with him. To these tardy excuses he finally replies by a terrible "I know you not"; and the epithet, "workers of iniquity," gives the reason for this final rejection.

This picture we have already seen toward the end of the Sermon on the Mount.[391] The following one, which in St. Matthew's Gospel is connected with the curing of the centurion's servant,[392] shows us the pagans joyfully sharing the heavenly banquet presided over by the Jewish patriarchs. It may well be that Christ repeated its principal features on two different occasions. As for the proverb, "The last shall be first . . . ," it is certain that our Lord repeated it many times, making various applications of it.[393]

Thus it is that, in connection with an abstract, futile question, the Divine Master makes His hearers enter into themselves, so as to arouse in them a lively interest in their own salvation. From a practical standpoint, what matters it whether few or many are saved? The essential thing for each one is to be of the number of the saved; and this goal is reached only at the price of vigorous and constant efforts.

St. Luke then relates that "the same day there came some of the Pharisees, saying to Him: Depart, and get Thee hence, for Herod hath a mind to kill Thee." [394] Was the warning sincere? It may well be doubted. After the many proofs the

[391] Matt. 7:21–23.

[392] Matt. 8:11 f.

[393] Besides this passage in St. Luke, it is to be found twice in the First and Second Gospels (Matt. 19:30; 20:16; Mark 10:31).

[394] Luke 13:31–33.

Pharisaic party had given of its ever increasing hostility towards the Savior, how can we suppose that suddenly they were interested in His safety? We may, therefore, quite rightly suppose that these insidious men sought to intimidate Him and to induce Him to depart from the region where He then was—probably Peraea, which, like Galilee, belonged to the domain of Herod Antipas. They hoped He would take refuge in Judea, where He would easily fall into the hands of His enemies. However, the tetrarch, who had cruelly put John the Baptist to death, might very well have been jealous of the growing influence of Christ, and might have decided to proceed seriously against Him, if He did not at once leave his territory.

With admirable calmness, dignity, and courage, Jesus replied, as though accepting the sincerity of the advice: "Go and tell that fox: Behold, I cast out devils and do cures [395] to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am consummated. Nevertheless I must walk to-day and to-morrow and the day following, because it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." That fox! The appellation was not flattering; but Antipas deserved it by his crafty, deceitful nature, resembling that of the fox, which is a common animal in Palestine. Let them, therefore, tell Herod from Jesus that, in spite of the schemes that may be entertained against Him, He will not alter the line of conduct that has been divinely marked out for Him. Until the hour, now near at hand, which His Father appointed for His "consummation," that is, for His death, He will engage in His usual ministry without making any change, and without being troubled or frightened by anyone. Then, when that hour has come, He will fearlessly go to Jerusalem to be put to death; for it was decreed that the

[395] As on a previous occasion (Matt. 11:4 f.; Luke 7:22), our Lord speaks of the driving out of devils and the cure of the sick as divine signs of His Messianic office.

Messias should consummate His sacrifice in the very capital of the theocracy. It is perhaps not without a certain irony that Jesus here attributes to the Jewish capital the sad monopoly of the martyrdom of the prophets.

Some time afterwards, our Lord was again invited to dine [396] at the house of "one of the chiefs of the Pharisees." By this expression the Evangelist simply means an influential member of the party, for the Pharisees had no chiefs, strictly so called. But in their ranks, as in all social classes, superiority of mind, of wealth, and of position naturally conferred a certain authority. The Savior, as usual, accepted the invitation, in spite of the annoyance He had recently experienced under circumstances of a like sort.[397] It was a Sabbath, the day which the Jews, as we said above, were wont to honor outwardly by serving better food than usual at the family table.[398] The other guests, who belonged mostly to the Pharisee party, watched the Savior with evil intent,[399] hoping to discover something to criticize.

Before the meal began, "behold there was a certain man before Him that had the dropsy." According to many commentators, this somewhat brusque way of presenting the sick man would indicate that he had been purposely introduced to lay a trap for our Lord. This, however, is a mere conjecture, because, thanks to the easy-going familiarity of Oriental customs,[400] the sick man might of his own accord have entered the dining-room to arouse the pity of Christ, whom he probably implored with a silent look, not daring openly to ask to be cured.

Anticipating the thought in His adversaries' minds, and

[396] Literally: "to eat bread." This is a frequent Hebraism (cf. 2 Kings 9:7, 10; 4 Kings 4:8; Luke 7:33, etc.).

[397] Luke 11:37–54.

[398] Cfr. Tob. 2:5; Neh. 8:9–12, etc.

[399] The Greek expression is characteristic: "they were watching . . ."

[400] Luke 7:37 f.

thus showing that He did not fear them, the Savior asked them: "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?" This sudden question must have disconcerted them, for they maintained an embarrassed silence. How could they sanction what, to their minds, was a violation of the sacred repose? On the other hand, they hesitated to say that it was not lawful to cure a sick man on the Sabbath. After vainly waiting for them to answer, Christ took the man by the hand, cured him without uttering a word, and dismissed him. He had read the man's faith in his soul and rewarded him for it.[401]

Then again addressing the assembled guests, He covered them with confusion by repeating, with slight changes, the irrefutable argument which He had used a short time before under identical circumstances:[402] "Which of you shall have his son[403] or his ox fall into a pit, and will not immediately draw him out on the Sabbath day?" Of course, they were unable to answer. Thus it was that Christ little by little freed the Sabbath from the petty and ridiculous observances in which a stupid and superstitious tradition had involved it.[404]

St. Luke reports another example of the Savior's familiar conversations. While He was being watched from all sides, He could observe the conduct of those gathered about Him,[405] and therefrom could draw lessons useful for their sanctification. As they were sitting down at table one day, He remarked the wretched little maneuvers of most of the guests

[401] Let us recall that our Lord cured seven sick or infirm persons on the Sabbath: the demoniac of Capharnaum (Mark 1:21–25; Luke 4:31–35); St. Peter's mother-in-law (Matt. 8:14 f.; Mark 1:30 f.; Luke 4:38 f.); the paralytic of Bethseda (John 5:5–9); the man with the withered hand (Matt. 12:10–13; Mark 3:1–5; Luke 6:6–10); the man born blind (John 9:1–14); the infirm woman (Luke 13:10–12); and the man with dropsy.

[402] Luke 13:15; cf. Matt. 12:11 f.

[403] This reading has much better warrant of authenticity than that of the Vulgate, where we read "his ass."

[404] With many Jews of to-day the same narrowness of mind and conduct still prevails. See Coypel, *Le Judäisme, Esquisse de Mœures Juives,* pp. 170–195.

[405] See Volume I, pp. 403–405.

to occupy the first places. The Pharisees had long since been given to this practice, as we learn from the following curious anecdote, recounted in the Talmud.[406] One day, when the Hasmonean king, Alexander Janneus,[407] was giving a dinner to a number of Persian satraps, Simeon ben Shetash was one of the guests. No sooner had the rabbi entered the banquet hall, than he straightway sat down in the place of honor between the king and the queen. When rebuked for this arrogant intrusion, he promptly replied: "Is it not written in the Book of Sirach: [408] Exalt wisdom, and it will exalt thee?" This shows how extreme was the infatuation of the Jewish theologians of that period.[409] Jesus began speaking to those at table, imparting to them all, in a kindly way, an excellent counsel of humility. He said:

"When thou art invited to a wedding, sit not down in the first place, lest perhaps one more honorable than thou be invited by him, and he that invited thee and him, come and say to thee, Give this man place; and then thou begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when thou art invited, go sit down in the lowest place; that when he who invited thee cometh, he may say to thee: Friend, go up higher. Then shalt thou have glory before them that sit at table with thee. Because every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted." [410]

Christ purposely localizes the scene at a wedding dinner because on such occasions, in the upper classes of society, etiquette is more formal and guests are placed at table according to their social rank. Evidently it was not His purpose to impart any rules of worldly politeness and good manners, based on selfish motives, which would substitute a refined

[406] Cf. Lightfoot, *Horae hebraicae et talmudicae, in h. l.*
[407] See Volume I, p. 124, footnote.
[408] Ecclus. 15:5.
[409] Cf. Matt. 23:6; Mark 12:39; Luke 20:46.
[410] Luke 14:8–11.

pride for a coarse vanity. His thought goes beyond His words and, in this figurative language, He veils a lesson of humility, as may be seen from the adage which serves as a conclusion to the parable: "Every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled. . . ." This pronouncement [411] corresponds to a providential decree, the frequent fulfilment of which, mentioned by pagan writers as well as by Jewish rabbis, is a fitting punishment for the proud.

Jesus then turned to the host and in gracious terms imparted a lesson to him also:

"When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends nor thy brethren nor thy kinsmen nor thy neighbors who are rich; lest perhaps they also invite thee again, and a recompense be made to thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind; and thou shalt be blessed, because they have not wherewith to make thee recompense; for recompense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just." [412]

This little parable contains a beautiful lesson of fraternal charity. We scarcely need to point out that, like so many other of the Divine Master's counsels, it is purposely presented in the form of a paradox, and to interpret all its details in an absolute manner, would be an extreme exaggeration. In fact, Christ never intended to disturb social relations insofar as they were lawful. When He says, "Call not . . . ," He means: Do not invite simply with a view to receiving a return invitation. That would be a selfish kind of hospitality. Let the poor and the lowly also have their part, in some way or other. The Mosaic Law, too, urged the rich to invite the poor on certain days.[413]

[411] It is cited three different times by the Evangelists. Cf. Matt. 23: 12; Luke 18: 14.

[412] Luke 14: 12–14.

[413] Cf. Deut. 12: 5–12; 14: 28 f.; 15: 11; 26: 11–13; Neh. 8: 10. We have these fine words from Plato (*Phaed.*, 233): "To our feasts we should invite, not our

The Savior's last remarks aroused a religious feeling in the hearts of those at table. One of them, giving expression to his enthusiasm, said to Him: "Blessed is he that shall eat bread [414] in the Kingdom of God." This amounts to saying: Blessed are the elect! for Holy Scripture [415] and the rabbis again and again compare the joys of Heaven to a delightful banquet. This exclamation may have been somewhat in a spirit of vain self-satisfaction, but there is no reason for suspecting it of hypocrisy. It prompted a third lesson, more important than the two previous lessons, which Jesus sets forth in another parable, more weighty and developed:

"A certain man made a great supper and invited many. And he sent his servant at the hour of supper to say to them that were invited, that they should come, for now all things are ready. And they began all at once to make excuse. The first said to him: I have bought a farm, and I must needs go out and see it; I pray thee, hold me excused. And another said: I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to try them; I pray thee, hold me excused. And another said: I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. And the servant returning, told these things to his lord. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant: Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and the feeble and the blind and the lame. And the servant said: Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said to the servant: Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in,[416] that my house may be filled. But I say unto you, that none of those men that were invited, shall taste of my supper." [417]

friends, but the poor and wretched. Although they cannot repay us, by their good wishes they will call down blessings upon us."

[414] That is, "he who shall take his repasts."

[415] Cf. Luke 13:29.

[416] Not, of course, by means of force, but by urging them.

[417] Luke 14:16–24.

The opening lines refer to a practice that was in vogue among the Romans [418] and that is still common among the Arabs of Palestine.[419] It was customary for the host to send a special messenger to the invited guests at the last moment, to inform them that all was ready. Under such conditions, to refuse to come after previously accepting the invitation, was an insult to the master of the house. The latter at once resented it, especially as refusals came to him from all sides at the same time, and as these refusals were for futile reasons. In fact, the occupation alleged could have been attended to beforehand or could have been postponed without great inconvenience. But this man, as wise as he is generous, who represents God the Father, did not feast without guests; by two other successive appeals he was able to fill the vacant places at table. The first of the appeals was made in the streets and public squares of the city; the second, upon the highways outside the city walls.

The application of the details of the parable is evident to anyone who is acquainted with the Savior's conduct during His public life, and with the great principles which guided Him. The guests first invited stand for the Jews, to whom God had opened the gates of the Messianic Kingdom first, by virtue of the special right which He had decreed for them in the past. When, despite His kindly appeals to them by His prophets, then by the precursor, and finally by Christ Himself, they remained deaf to His fatherly voice, He offered His favors and graces to other members of His nation—the parable represents them also as residing within the theocratic city—but to members of a lower rank, "the poor and the feeble and the blind and the lame," morally speaking, that is, sinners

[418] Cf. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, X, xxxvi, 89; Suetonius, *Caligula*, 39, etc.

[419] See Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, p. 125; Tristram, *Eastern Customs*, p. 82.

and publicans in contrast with the Scribes and Pharisees and other classes that remained unbelieving. The third invitation was still more kindly and characteristic, since it was addressed to the pagans, who would be sought outside of Judaism and who, after some resistance, would come in large numbers to the banquet hall. The whole history of the divine plan regarding the Redemption is summed up in these few lines. The majestic conclusion, "I say unto you, that none of those men that were invited, shall taste of my supper," fell with terrible force upon the heads of the guilty ones. It clearly marks the reprobation of the Jews as a nation. But they alone are to blame, since they refused to come to the feast, notwithstanding two invitations.

On another occasion, as Christ was pursuing His journey, large crowds gathered about Him, half inclined to look upon Him as the Messias. He turned to these momentary partisans, many of whom, as He knew, were only superficially devoted to Him, and said: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." This is stern language, partly paradoxical, which the Savior repeats, with some changes, before various audiences.[420] He could not have more forcibly declared that universal renunciation and a disposition to accept every sort of suffering, even death, were necessary for those who desired to take their stand under His law. His Passion was near at hand, and at that decisive hour, full of peril for the disciples as well as the Master, no one should be in ignorance of the price at which a man becomes a member of the Kingdom of Heaven.

After recalling these great principles, the Savior commented upon them, showing by two striking examples, both taken

[420] Matt. 6:24; 10:35, 38; 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23.

from social life and presented in a somewhat parabolic form, what humiliations and dangers would threaten an enthusiastic disciple who was not deeply anchored in his convictions and who would abandon Him after a passing attachment to Him.

The first example is that of the unwise builder:

"Which of you having a mind to build a tower, doth not first sit down and reckon the charges that are necessary, whether he have wherewithal to finish it; lest, after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that see it begin to mock him, saying: This man began to build, and was not able to finish." [421]

How imprudent it is, in very truth, to undertake so considerable a building as a tower without first making a careful estimate and being assured that one's purse is sufficiently provided to meet the expenses?

The second example is that of the king who rashly declares war upon a neighboring ruler:

"What king, about to go to make war against another king, doth not first sit down and think whether he be able, with ten thousand, to meet him that with twenty thousand cometh against him? Or else, whilst the other is yet afar off, sending an embassy, he desireth conditions of peace. So likewise every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be My disciple." [422]

In this case it is not merely a single individual, but a whole people, that would have to suffer from so serious an imprudence; for a military expedition begun under such conditions could seemingly end only in disaster.

The moral of these two examples is easy to deduce. The Christian life is a splendid edifice; but it has to be built. Says St. Gregory of Nyssa, "just as it takes more than one stone

[421] Luke 14: 28–30.
[422] Luke 14: 31–33.

to build a tower, so does it require more than one commandment to lead the soul to perfection." [423] Consequently a man should seriously reckon what he is capable of, before becoming a disciple of Christ. How shameful it would be to turn back afterwards! Then, too, the Christian life is a perpetual warfare—against oneself, the world, and the devil. But every war supposes difficulties, fatigues, and perils. This our Lord points out to His disciples, so that they may know what awaits them if they persist in their attachment to Him. Yet manifestly these two comparisons must not be taken too literally, for in that case it would appear that, under many circumstances, one should not even try to lay the foundation of a Christian life. Of course Christ did not intend to prevent anyone from becoming His disciple. Again we are in the presence of hyperbolical and paradoxical expressions, which are equivalent to saying: The enterprise is arduous; but make generous efforts, you will succeed. Otherwise, beware of spiritual bankruptcy, of a total defeat of your soul, that is, apostasy.

The Savior concluded His discourse by pointing out the necessity of the spirit of sacrifice. "Salt is good," He said. "But if the salt shall lose its savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither profitable for the land nor for the dunghill, but shall be cast out." [424] Pliny also said: "Nothing is better than salt and sunlight." [425] Jesus, after stating this truth, raised it to the height of a great moral principle. What can a lukewarm Christian accomplish, deprived of the energy which is the property of men of renunciation and sacrifice? This is the third time [426] that our Lord applied the idea of salt to supernatural things.

[423] *Catena D. Thomae, in h. l.*
[424] Luke 14:34 f.
[425] *Hist. Nat.*, XXXI, ix, 45.
[426] Cf. Matt. 5:13; Mark 9:49.

IV. Parables about God's Mercy to Sinners [427]

Christ manifested His goodness under so many forms and, by His vivid, lofty, yet popular teaching, so forcibly attracted the attention of all, that the publicans and great sinners gathered about Him in large numbers [428] wherever He stopped. Instead of rebuffing them with Pharisaic arrogance and harshness, He gave them a cordial welcome and so won the souls and hearts of many of them. But the pitiless and haughty Scribes and Pharisees were displeased at His conduct and openly murmured against it. They said to one another, contemptuously: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." The latter detail was, to their mind, even more blameworthy than the former, because, according to Oriental notions, the act of eating a meal together establishes close relations between persons.

The Savior justifies His conduct by recounting three of His most beautiful and eloquent parables—those of the lost sheep, of the groat, and of the prodigal son—which express one and the same thought under varied figures: the infinitely generous pardon which God grants to repentant sinners, and His joy at their conversion. These three little poems mutually supplement each other. In the first two, God Himself goes forth to meet sinful souls; the third parable describes especially the sinner's own activity, his efforts to seek and find his God, from whom he has the misfortune to be separated. The combination of these parables forms a harmonious whole, because, according to theology,[429] repentance requires these two elements: divine grace going before, and man's correspondence

[427] Luke 15: 1–17: 19.

[428] Literally, in the Greek text and in the Vulgate: "There were coming to Him"; the form of the expression indicates a habitual and continually repeated act or fact. By way of hyperbole, the Greek text adds the adjective "all."

[429] *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, cap. 4–6.

with, grace.[430] Thus grouped by our Lord, they are a magnificent triology, each part of which is truly charming.

We have already met with the first of these parables in St. Matthew's Gospel,[431] but in a slightly abridged form and at an earlier period of Christ's life. It is so capable of stirring men's hearts, that we are not surprised at the Divine Master repeating it before a new audience. In the Third Gospel it reads as follows:

"What man of you that hath an hundred sheep, and if he shall lose one of them, doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which was lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, lay it upon his shoulders, rejoicing; and coming home, call together his friends and neighbors, saying to them: Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost? I say to you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance." [432]

We have already explained the chief features of this story. Nowhere perhaps, unless in the crib and on Calvary, does Christ appear to us more divinely beautiful than in this figure, which He so wonderfully fulfilled. The charming words, "lay it upon his shoulders," a detail peculiar to St. Luke's version, is particularly touching. The same may be said of the detail

[430] The following general notions also are not without interest. 1) The numbers mentioned in the three parables are arranged in a descending scale (one out of a hundred, one out of ten, one out of two). But the gradation is really an ascending one, if we consider the idea expressed; the loss of one sheep out of a hundred is less than that of one drachma out of ten, and the loss in either case is far from equalling that of a beloved son. 2) The guilt seems to follow the same ascending scale. There is the sin of ignorance, represented by the stupid sheep straying away from the sheepfold; there is the graver sin, which is represented by the coin, symbolizing, as the Fathers say, the human soul stamped with the divine image and knowing that it belongs to God; and there is the entirely voluntary sin of the prodigal, whom nothing can excuse. Cf. Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Luc*, p. 277.

[431] Matt. 18: 12–14.

[432] Luke 15: 4–7.

which tells us of God rejoicing with the angels and saints in Heaven at a sinner's conversion, as the shepherd rejoices with his friends and neighbors after finding his sheep.[433] The rabbinical writings relate that, "when Moses fed the sheep of Jethro in the wilderness,[434] and a kid had gone astray, he went after it and found it drinking at a spring. As he thought it might be weary, he laid it on his shoulder and brought it back. . . . God said that, because he had shown pity to the sheep of a man, He would give him His own sheep, Israel, to feed." [435]

Though short, the parable of the groat is hardly less significant. It also makes us admire God's solicitude in going forth to meet sinners, that He may help them shake off the burden of their sins:

"Or what woman having ten groats, if she lose one groat, doth not light a candle and sweep the house and seek diligently until she find it? And when she hath found it, call together her friends and neighbors, saying: Rejoice with me, because I have found the groat which I had lost. So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance." [436]

The drachma (which the Douay Version translates "groat") was a silver coin, worth about eighteen cents.[437] As its name indicates, it was of Greek origin. At that time it was current in Palestine, along with other coins of the Roman Empire. A drachma was in itself not of great value, but for a poor woman who possessed only ten of them, it was a com-

[433] It seems hardly necessary to remark that the Savior's language becomes hyperbolical and paradoxical when He says that God rejoices more at the sincere return of a single sinner than at the faithful perseverance of ninety-nine just. This is an Oriental way of saying that such a return is very pleasing to God. (See St. Gregory, *Hom. in Evang.*, 34; St. Bernard, *In Cantic.*, Serm. 29.)

[434] Ex. 3:1.

[435] Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 257.

[436] Luke 15:8–10.

[437] It was about equal to a Roman *denarius*, or one-quarter of a Jewish shekel.

paratively large amount. Hence her painstaking efforts to find it [438] and her great rejoicing when she did.

The third of this series is the universally admired parable of the prodigal son,[439] which has justly been called "the pearl and crown of all the parables of Scripture." "Never certainly in human language was so much—such a world of love and wisdom and tenderness—compressed into such few immortal words." [440] The two preceding parables were a reply to the accusation of the Scribes and Pharisees against Christ, and fully justified His conduct by the example of God Himself. But the figure under which they show God's activity on behalf of sinners, "being taken from the animal world or from inanimate nature, was too much beneath their object. They did not offer Jesus the means of displaying the richness of the mercy that fills God's heart toward the sinner, nor to unfold the inner story of a sinner in the drama of conversion. For that was needed a figure taken from the domain of moral and sentient nature, from the sphere of human life." [441] Our Lord, therefore, after showing us the divine side of grace in the conversion of sinners, now shows us its human side, by describing the birth and progressive development of repentance in a sinful soul. This forms the first step in returning to God.

The parable has two distinct parts: the principal part refers directly to the prodigal son, the other to his elder brother. In the former, our Lord, with unsurpassed psychological truth and delicacy, describes the conditions of a sincere and solid conversion:

[438] A lamp had to be lighted even in broad day, not only to search under the furniture, but because the houses of the poor are windowless in Palestine and receive no light from the outside except through the open doorway.

[439] Luke 15: 11–32.

[440] Trench, *Notes on the Parables*, 11th ed., p. 384; Farrar, *Life of Christ*, 23d ed., II, 134.

[441] Godet, *Commentaire sur l'Évangile de S. Luc*, 2d ed., II, 189.

"A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father: Father, give me the portion of inheritance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his substance. And not many days after, the younger son, gathering all together, went abroad into a far country, and there wasted his substance, living riotously. And after he had spent all, there came a mighty famine in that country; and he began to be in want. And he went and cleaved to one of the citizens of that country. And he sent him into his farm to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him."

Such is the first act of this drama, old yet ever new. The central figure of this sad story, by indulging his passions, quickly falls, by one debasement after another, into extreme wretchedness. But this very state of misery is the most precious of graces for him because it shows him his base ingratitude to his father and to God, and puts him in the way of sincere repentance.

The beginning of the parable is simple. It shows us a wealthy family, a father and two grown-up sons—probably the mother was dead. The readiness with which the father, at the younger son's request, consents to make a premature division of his substance between his two sons, surprises us at first sight. It was easy to foresee the wicked use which would be made of such a settlement by this unworthy son, whose selfishness and evil tendencies must have been known to the father. We do not know enough about the Jewish laws of that time to judge whether this request was based on a genuine right. Perhaps there was merely a question of a division of the property left by the mother. All this is only a secondary detail of the account, yet it has some importance, since the purpose of the parable is to indicate the freedom which God leaves to man in the use of his powers to do good or evil.

The prodigal hastily liquidated his property so that he

might dispose of it the more easily. Then, as quickly as possible, he left his father's house, where he might have lived happily. Our Lord touches delicately upon the wanton life into which he plunged, which has given him his name of "prodigal son." [442] His punishment was not long delayed. From this point of view the coincidence between the terrible famine that came upon the country, where he had settled, and the complete loss of his fortune, was truly providential. Without money, without a trade, without a taste for work, this scion of a distinguished family had to accept the office of feeding swine, a labor doubly degrading for a Jew. And he had not enough to eat, for as food was given sparingly on account of the famine, he experienced perpetual pangs of hunger. There is something tragic in the words, "He would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat; [443] and no man gave unto him."

The second act of the first part of the parable shows us the sinner's conversion, from the initial but still imperfect sign of his repentance to the full and complete restoration of his former privileges:

"And returning to himself, he said: How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger? I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee; I am not worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And rising up he came to his father. And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and

[442] Ζῶν ἀσώτως (Vulg., *vivendo luxuriose*), that is, like an ἄσωτος, a prodigal, a dissolute person.

[443] Very likely the reference is to the fruit of the carob tree (*Ceratonia siliqua*), a tree cultivated throughout Syria, as also in Egypt, Italy, and Spain. The Greeks called these pods κερατία (the word here used by St. Luke), because generally they are curved like "horns." Usually they are more than four inches long. They contain a whitish pulp, insipid but slightly sweet in taste. Orientals still use them to fatten their cattle. They are also used to some extent in pharmacy.

running to him fell upon his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee; I am not worthy to be called thy son. And the father said to his servants: Bring forth quickly the first robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; because this my son was dead, and is come to life again; was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry." [444]

The words, "returning to himself," form the very heart of this inner tragedy. The extreme outward wretchedness into which the prodigal had fallen helped him to emerge from his moral lethargy and despair. Jesus mentions only the essential thoughts of his reflections, which are worthy of a true penitent. Their starting-point is a contrast that could not help but come to the prodigal's mind. For him there was cruel hunger; in his father's house, even the servants lived in abundance. He then made a courageous resolve: "I will arise, and will go to my father"; and he likewise promised to make a humble confession. Then the resolve is carried out without delay.

The affectionate welcome by his father, who is here the perfect figure of the infinitely kind and merciful God, is described with inimitable art. The father, "running to him fell upon his neck and covered him with kisses." [445] The artists who have tried to depict the story of the prodigal son have for the most part been inspired by the picture here sketched by our Lord. Spada's painting attracts particular attention. It contains only two half-length figures, "but it would be impossible more successfully to depict that tender commiseration of a father unmindful of his son's wrongdoing. . . . The head of the aged man is admirable. Compassion and love vie with tenderness, while repentance and hope animate the

[444] Luke 15: 17–24.

[445] This is the literal translation of the verb *κατεφίλησεν*, equivalent to the Latin *exosculatus est*.

face of the son, whose lips seem to be pronouncing the touching words: Father, I have sinned." [446] According to St. Luke, it seems that the repentant prodigal did not finish his confession in the words he had prepared. The signs of generous pardon shown him by his father prevented his saying, as he intended, "Make me as one of thy hired servants." He felt that would be a useless request.

The scene of rehabilitation is as well described as the rest of the parable. The emotion overwhelming the happy father did not at first enable him to answer his son otherwise than by acts which vividly expressed his tenderness. As soon as he could speak, it was to issue brief orders to his servants, first that he might at once remove the traces of the physical and moral abjection of his son, then with a view to the feasting by which he wished to celebrate his return. The last words,

"Because this my son was dead,
and is come to life again;
was lost,
and is found"—

form a distich in the Hebrew manner. We shall see them again repeated as a sort of refrain somewhat farther on.

The father's noble conduct toward a son who had so grievously offended him, entirely justified that of the Savior toward publicans and other public sinners. The second part of the parable is of an altogether different character; it introduces us to the elder son, whom our Lord had merely mentioned at the beginning of the parable, and affords Christ an opportunity to give another lesson:

"Now his elder son was in the field, and when he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.[447] And he

[446] *Musée Chrétien*, p. 140 *bis*.

[447] In the East and generally among all peoples of ancient times, there was music and dancing in connection with great festivities. Cf. Is. 5:12; Amos 6:5;

called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said to him: Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe. And he was angry and would not go in. His father therefore coming out began to entreat him. And he answering, said to his father: Behold, for so many years do I serve thee, and I have never transgressed thy commandment, and yet thou hast never given me a kid to make merry with my friends. But as soon as this thy son is come, who hath devoured his substance with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. But he said to him: Son, thou art always with me, and all I have is thine. But it was fit that we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead and is come to life again; he was lost and is found." [448]

The prodigal son wins our sympathy by his sincere conversion, and his brother wins only disfavor by his unfeeling heart and critical spirit. Instead of going out to embrace the repentant sinner and to celebrate his return, he is angered at the honorable reception and the full pardon given him. And when his father, with a benevolence which again recalls that of God, finds him and wishes to bring him to the banquet hall, not only does he refuse to follow him thither, but he insolently rebukes him. If we were to take this selfish son's words at their face value, the paternal house was but a place of perpetual slavery for him. In harsh terms he contrasts his own conduct with that of the prodigal; and he bitterly compares what his father has done for sons so unlike each other. His tacit inference is that he has been subjected to unjust treatment.

The father's reply is full of quiet dignity. It reminds this thankless son, by way of refuting his unjust complaints, of the privileges he has ever enjoyed with so good a father. It also reminds him of the true nature of the festivity which so

Matt. 14:6; Suetonius, *Caligula*, 37; Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 374, etc. This entertainment was furnished by hired musicians and dancers, engaged for the occasion.

[448] Luke 15:25–32.

aroused his discontent: it was not a reward for misconduct; it was the expression of a father's joy at finding a son whom he thought lost, a joy which his other son should be the first to understand and share.

Thereupon the parable suddenly ends, as though it wished to afford the elder son time to meditate upon the important lesson just given him. Over his head, as we can easily grasp, it reached directly the Scribes and Pharisees, who, like him, boasted of being always faithful to their duties; who, like him, served their Father, God, in a servile spirit; and who, like him, murmured and were angry at seeing sinners kindly received by Christ.

V. New Lessons on the Proper Use of Wealth

Christ again and again returned to the subject of the proper use of wealth. At this point He does so in the form of parables, which are reckoned among the most remarkable jewels of His poetic treasury.

St. Luke, who continues to be our sole guide for the events of this period, does not intimate any interval of time between this series of the Master's teaching and the preceding series. Probably there was none; and the discourse we are about to consider may have been separated from the one we have just read, only by a simple pause. Our Lord, addressing not the Pharisees, but His disciples,[449] entered directly into His subject without the use of any introductory phrases. He said: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward; and the same was accused unto him, that he had wasted his goods. And he called him and said to him: How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship, for now thou canst be steward no longer." [450]

[449] This is expressly noted by the Evangelist (Luke 16:1).
[450] Luke 16:1 f.

The reader's attention is captured from the very first lines of this story, as must have been the case with our Lord's audience. This steward, who is to play the chief part in the parable, was, as appears from the further details, a general administrator,[451] whose duty it was to manage and increase the property of his master, who was habitually absent. The steward had shamefully abused his office, since he had "wasted" the goods entrusted to him, and since he had appropriated a considerable part thereof to himself, so as to lead a life of pleasure. When hurriedly summoned to appear before his master, to whom his embezzlement had been reported, he at once received a humiliating dismissal, with a command to render an immediate accounting. He did not attempt to exculpate himself, so true was the accusation. Knowing that his dismissal was final, he thought, upon returning home, only of taking steps that would enable him to live comfortably without working, and at the expense of others.

Jesus continued the parable, saying:

"And the steward said within himself: What shall I do, because my lord taketh away from me the stewardship? To dig I am not able; to beg I am ashamed. I know what I will do, that when I shall be removed from the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses."

This little monologue enables us to read the very soul of this depraved man, who has decided to resort to any means to gratify his selfishness. In his reflections he at first sees only a double alternative as to a way of earning his living: to beg, or to engage in rude labor. His pride recoils before

[451] In the Greek, he is called *οἰκονόμος*. The term *villicus*, which the Vulgate uses, is less suitable in this passage, because here there is question of an office of greater importance than that mentioned in Luke 12:42, and there likewise called "steward." This latter was merely a slave in charge of other slaves; the one referred to in the present text is a *procurator*, having very extensive powers.

the former of these two options; his softness, before the second. Of a sudden, he discovers an expedient that will enable him to live at ease, without toilsome labor and without very great humiliation. He then hastens to execute his plan. He will again very grievously injure his master's interests; but what is that for a soul without a conscience?

The continuation of the parable shows the steward carrying out his scheme:

"Therefore calling together every one of his lord's debtors, he said to the first: How much dost thou owe my lord? But he said: An hundred barrels of oil. And he said to him: Take thy bill and sit down quickly and write fifty. Then he said to another: And how much dost thou owe? Who said: An hundred quarters of wheat. He said to him: Take thy bill and write eighty."

It is difficult to decide whether these debtors were farmers who paid their rent in kind, or merchants who had obtained provisions from the steward. This point matters little, since in either case the theft was the same. A few archeological explanations will show its extent. In the Greek text the words we translate by "barrels" and "quarters" are taken from the Hebrew: for oil, it is the *bath;* for wheat, the *khor*. Among the ancient Jews, the word *bath* was given to the largest liquid measure, equal to the Attic *mitretes* according to Josephus, *i. e.,* about ten gallons. The *khor* was the largest dry measure used for grain and vegetables. It contained ten *bath,* consequently eleven bushels.

As a result of the changes made in the bills or receipts, the debt for the oil was reduced one-half, *i. e.,* about five hundred gallons; this caused the owner a loss of several thousand dollars. For the wheat, the bill was reduced one-fifth; but as this reduction amounted to about 217 bushels, the theft was even greater. Why were the two debtors treated differently? This was probably owing to the steward's shrewdness. He knew

his world, and he foresaw that the same results would be obtained by different concessions, according to the personal circumstances of those whom he joined in his thefts. The two cases cited in the parable are only examples chosen from many others. In fact, the steward must have acted in a like manner with all his master's chief debtors.

The secret of the dishonest transactions was known to too many people for it to be kept quiet. The "rich man" of the parable soon learned of it and, says our Lord, he "commended the unjust steward, forasmuch as he had done wisely." So astonishing has this conclusion seemed to many ancient and modern interpreters, that they have distorted the sense of the parable, so as to bring it into harmony with what they judge to be its true meaning. They are unable to comprehend this praise, coming from an owner who has been shamefully robbed, and seeming to justify the thief's conduct. Yet the text is very clear.[452] Evidently the praise does not apply to the steward's act itself, which was a vile piece of knavery, but to the cleverness, the *savoir faire* with which it was planned and carried out. Thus is it, as Christ says, that "the children of this world [meaning, people of the world, whose thoughts and acts are directed toward material interests] are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Those whom Jesus calls by this latter title [453] are His own disciples, whom He says that He wished to see as wise and clever in the matter of spiritual profits to be derived from earthly possessions, as the worldly usually are in tirelessly increasing their wealth.[454]

Our Lord, wishing to impress this advice more deeply in

[452] It says: *φρονίμως* (Vulg., *prudenter*), that is, intelligently. The morality of the act is not in question.

[453] We will find our Lord again using this expression, John 12:36; St. Paul also makes use of it, Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:5.

[454] Luke 16:8.

the minds and hearts of His hearers, developed it in various forms:

"And I say to you: Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity; that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings. He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is greater; and he that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also in that which is greater. If then you have not been faithful in the unjust mammon, who will trust you with that which is the true? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." [455]

The expression "Mammon of iniquity" [456] (*i. e.,* riches of iniquity) is well justified. This is not to say that the Savior condemned wealth *in se;* on the contrary, He here declares that it can procure great spiritual advantages for those who know how to profit by it in performing good works. But the parable we have just read, as also the one which closely follows it, shows that the possession of earthly goods is often an occcasion of moral wretchedness; in this life and in the next, it causes the unhappiness of many. The Savior cites a striking example of the profit that may be derived from it. By sharing it with the poor, we make friends through whose intercession we can obtain an everlasting abode and happiness in heaven,[457] not the humiliating, precarious, and short-lived hospitality which the unjust steward strove to gain by dishonesty and theft.

[455] Luke 16:9–13.

[456] Our Lord called riches by this name of "Mammon" in His Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 6:24). We explained the term in connection with that passage. (See Volume II, p. 306.)

[457] In this same sense, the Talmud says that "the rich help the poor in this world, and the poor help the rich in the other world." Cf. Schoettgen, *Horae Hebr., in h. l.*

The words, "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is greater . . . ," express a general principle and one of daily experience. The just application of it is that no one ever promotes to a higher position a person who has abused his master's trust in a position of lesser importance. Jesus then deduces the conclusion from this rule with regard to His disciples. By "the true mammon [*i. e.*, riches]" and "that which is your own," He means the riches of grace, supernatural and heavenly riches, which alone have lasting, absolute value; in other words, the kingdom "prepared for you from the foundation of the world."[458] The closing lines of the passage are also part of the Sermon on the Mount.[459] Here they are the concluding point of our Lord's discourse.

A special circumstance, mentioned by St. Luke in the characteristic vigor of his style,[460] prompted our Lord to begin speaking again almost immediately. The Evangelist says: "Now the Pharisees, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided Him." They had remained in the crowd, according to their custom, to spy upon the Savior's words and acts. In the whole passage we have just read, they sought in vain for something with which to accuse Him. But, being friends of Mammon and almost as insatiable for money as they were for honors,[461] they considered ridiculous such an appreciation of wealth by a man who possessed nothing. Their gestures and contemptuous remarks did not escape our Lord's attention, and He did not let this insult pass without protest. Addressing His words directly to them, He first rebukes them for their shameless hypocrisy: "You are they who justify themselves before men, but God knoweth your

[458] Matt. 25:34.
[459] Matt. 6:24.
[460] Luke 16:14.
[461] Matt. 23:14. This same charge is made against them in the Talmud.

hearts; for that which is high to men, is an abomination before God." [462] He then continues: "The Law and the prophets were until John; from that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every one useth violence towards it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the Law to fall. Every one that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery." [463]

Here we have three profound thoughts, already mentioned in the First Gospel, but on three different occasions.[464] It is rather difficult to determine their connection with one another and with the context. Perhaps the Savior's words are considerably abridged by St. Luke, or by the document which he followed at this point. But we have no sound reason to suppose that they were taken out of their proper chronological place to be inserted here. The connection between them is not impossible. We favor the following explanation: It is now more than ever necessary to be just before God, since the Messias had now founded His kingdom, to which men of faith hasten that they may enter and become members of the kingdom. Nevertheless, although the figures in the Mosaic Law have been fulfilled, its moral prescriptions cannot perish. Jesus does not mean to abolish, but to perfect them. The Pharisees are the ones who destroy the Law by their laxity upon certain points of the utmost importance, particularly as regards the institution of marriage; but Christ reëstablishes it in all its pristine vigor.

After this stern apostrophe, Christ resumed His subject and spoke another parable, regarding the goods of this world. By the example of a rich man who used his wealth only for

[462] Luke 16:15.

[463] Luke 16:16–18.

[464] For the first of these thoughts, see Matt. 11:12 f.; for the second, Matt. 5:18; for the third, Matt. 5:32. This last we shall soon meet again (Matt. 19:9; Mark 10:11).

his own interests, instead of employing part of it to relieve the distress of the poor, our Lord shows whither the selfish possession of earthly goods may lead. From a moral standpoint, wealth in itself is indifferent, but it carries with it grave responsibilities and dangers. Our Lord says:

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and no one did give him;[465] moreover the dogs came and licked his sores."[466]

This picture introduces, in lifelike antithesis, the two persons that form the center of the story: the wicked rich man and the poor Lazarus. The Evangelists summed up the Baptist's life of mortification by mentioning two characteristic features: one regarding his clothing, the other regarding his food.[467] In two similar details, Christ sums up the sensual, worldly life of the wicked rich man. The brilliant purple of Tyre and the fine linen of Egypt, white as snow, both famous in ancient times,[468] furnished his sumptuous clothing. His table luxury was in keeping with that of his dress. In two strokes of the brush it would be impossible better to portray a life of ease and softness, of perpetual feasting, of princely magnificence. And what a contrast was the condition of the poor Lazarus,[469] with his perpetual wretchedness and hunger and suffering![470]

[465] The Greek text does not contain the words "and no one did give him," which we read in the Vulgate. The words are taken from the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:16); but they probably correspond to the reality.

[466] Luke 16:19–21.

[467] Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6.

[468] Gen. 41:42; Esther 8:15; Prov. 31:22; Ezech. 27:7; Dan. 5:7, 16, 29; 1 Mach. 10:20; 11:58; 14:43; Apoc. 18:12; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, XIX, 4.

[469] In no other instance does our Lord give a name to any person in a parable.

[470] The closing detail, "Moreover the dogs came . . . ," is not introduced as an alleviation of Lazarus' wretchedness, but rather as an additional suffering.

After this impressive opening, Jesus takes us at once to the other world, where we again see these same two persons, but in quite altered conditions. Our Lord's brief sketch of the abode of the blessed and that of the damned is taken, in a general way, from the figures by which the Jewish theology of the time represented the state of the dead, in paradise or in hell, according as their lives had been holy or wicked.[471] These figures, although they should not be applied too much in detail, correspond to what Catholic theology teaches about Heaven and hell:

"And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died; and he was buried in hell. And lifting up his eyes when he was in torments, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said: Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. And Abraham said to him: Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted; and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is fixed a great chaos; so that they who would pass from hence to you, cannot, nor from thence come hither. And he said: Then, father, I beseech thee, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torments. And Abraham said to him: They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. But he said: No, father Abraham; but if one went to them from the dead, they will do penance. And he said to him: If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe, if one rise again from the dead." [472]

The parable stops abruptly at this point, leaving the hearers under the impression of this terrible, peremptory refusal.

[471] See Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 280.
[472] Luke 16:22–31.

Everything in the parable is so clear that a few explanations will suffice to supplement it.

Death freed Lazarus from his painful sufferings. But, as he had endured them patiently and as his life is supposed to have been virtuous, we see him, as soon as he enters the other world, receiving honors and enjoying the happiness reserved for the elect. The angels carry his soul to Paradise and gently place it "in the bosom of Abraham." This phrase is used by our Lord, as it was by the Jews of that time, to designate the abode of the blessed,[473] where "the father of believers" occupies a place of honor. According to Jewish ideas, the abode of the dead[474] was divided into two parts, separated by a deep abyss; one of these for the just, the other for the wicked. The scene which Christ describes as taking place there, is significant. In figurative language, He partly lifts the veil hiding the mysteries of the beyond. An interesting dialogue presently takes place between Abraham and the wicked rich man. The latter twice supplicates the mighty patriarch: first to obtain even a slight mitigation of his torments—his *crucior in hac flamma* is most eloquent—then to have his brethren warned that their eternal salvation was in danger. But his appeals were in vain. With calm dignity and unanswerable logic, Abraham reminded him that his lot was well-deserved and final, and that in the Sacred Scriptures his brothers had all they needed for their conversion—if they remained deaf to that inspired voice, they would not be moved by the voice of someone risen from the dead. While speaking thus, our Lord must have thought of the coming fulfilment of His words. Did the Pharisees believe in His divinity, when He

[473] Lightfoot, *Horae Hebr. et Talmud., h. l.;* Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Luc,* p. 298. The expression was also used by the holy Fathers and, through them, passed into Catholic theology and liturgy. Christian art has often attempted to set forth this naïve and gracious figure.

[474] Called *sheol* by the Hebrews, ἅδης by the Greeks, and *inferi* (underground place) by the Latins.

raised Lazarus from the dead? Did they believe in Him when, by an even more extraordinary miracle, He Himself came forth victoriously from the tomb?

Upon finishing this parable, Christ, no longer addressing the Pharisees, resumed His instructions to the disciples.[475] He gave them four important counsels. We have already heard the first three, which had been delivered on previous occasions. St. Luke quotes them in condensed form;[476] it is difficult to show a close connection between them, since several links of their logical sequence have been dropped. It was quite natural that Jesus should have several times repeated them, for they relate to essential points of the Christian life. They concern scandal, the forgiveness of injuries, and the power of faith.

The first speaks of the gravity of scandal. We have already seen it in St. Matthew and St. Mark.[477] "It is impossible that scandals should not come; but woe to him through whom they come. It were better for him that a millstone [478] were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should scandalize one of these little ones." [479]

The next admonition refers to forgiveness of injuries. The introductory *nota bene* emphasizes its importance. "Take heed to yourselves. If thy brother sin against thee, reprove him; and if he do penance, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day be converted unto thee, saying: I repent; forgive him." [480]

[475] Luke 17: 1–10.

[476] Luke 17: 1–6.

[477] Matt. 18: 6 f.; Mark 9: 41.

[478] That is, the stone of the portable mill, which is a regular part of domestic utensils in Eastern families. See Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 21, figs. 1–3.

[479] Luke 17: 1 f. The "little ones" are Christ's disciples, especially children and the most lowly.

[480] Luke 17: 3 f.

In the First Gospel [481] it was a question by Simon Peter that led to a similar advice; at that time Jesus said that forgiveness should be granted seventy times seven times. In both cases the number seven, a sacred number among the Jews, stands for unlimited pardon.

The Apostles, who formed an intimate circle about their Master, interrupted Him[482] with a petition that reveals the progress they had made in His divine school. They said: "Increase our faith." Christ replied to this request by a description of the marvelous results that can be effected by solid faith: "If you had faith like to a grain of mustard seed, you might say to this mulberry tree: Be thou rooted up, and be thou transplanted into the sea; and it would obey you." [483]

The phrase "like to a grain of mustard seed" is proverbial, indicating a modicum of faith, since this "is the least indeed of all seeds." [484] In the parallel passage in St. Matthew's Gospel,[485] instead of the mulberry tree, which was then, as it is to-day, cultivated in every part of Palestine, Jesus mentions one of the spurs of Mount Hermon, near which He then was with His followers. The supposition was, therefore, even more hyperbolic and paradoxical. It is an expressive way of noting the unlimited power of faith.

Then the Savior gave His disciples a fourth admonition, intended to forewarn them against temptations of vainglory which the exercise of their noble office might arouse in them:

"Which of you having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattle, will say to him, when he is come from the field: Immediately go, sit down to meat; and will not rather say to him: Make ready my supper and gird thyself [486] and serve me, whilst I eat and drink,

[481] Matt. 18:21 f.
[482] Luke 17:5.
[483] Luke 17:6.
[484] Matt. 13:32.
[485] Matt. 17:19.
[486] So that the long tunic will not be in his way.

and afterwards thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant for doing the things which he commanded him? I think not. So you also, when you shall have done all these things that are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do." [487]

In these lines, which are peculiar to the Third Gospel, the exhortation to practice humility is first set forth by a sort of parable, which Jesus then applies directly to His disciples. The example which serves as a basis for this lesson, is a fact of daily and universal experience. Ordinarily we do not feel under obligation to a servant, however faithful and devoted, for his sacrifices in caring for us. As the common saying is, he is paid for that; and often he does not receive a "Thank you" beyond his wages.[488] The most blameless Christian, to whatever extent he serves Jesus, only does his duty. In him every thought of pride or vain self-complacency would be supremely out of place. Although in another passage [489] the Savior promises a magnificent reward to His faithful servants, that is through pure generosity; without His constantly repeated graces of every kind, there would be no faithful servants.

In spite of His ceaseless coming and going at this period, about which even the Third Gospel gives us only vague chronological and topographical information, Christ, although stopping here and there in the villages along His route, steadily pursued His journey towards Jerusalem. St. Luke, at this point in his narrative, inserts a helpful geographical note, saying: "As He was going to Jerusalem, He passed between Samaria and Galilee." [490] This evidently means that our Lord, upon reaching the boundary of those

[487] Luke 17:7–10.

[488] As Seneca says, *De Controv.*, II, 13, *"non est beneficium, sed officium, facere quod debes."*

[489] Luke 12:37.

[490] Luke 17:11.

two provinces, instead of continuing in a southerly direction and following the direct road through Samaria to Jerusalem, turned east to the Jordan and Peraea, where His arrival is presently mentioned by the two other Synoptics. The road He seems to have taken led Him through the eastern part of the plain of Esdraelon as far as Scythopolis, where He crossed the Jordan and entered Peraea. His purpose in thus lengthening His route was not only to avoid the territory of the Samaritans, whose anti-Jewish hatred had recently been exhibited at His expense;[491] He also intended to devote a few days of His gospel ministry to the inhabitants of Peraea.

At the entrance to a village, the name of which we are not told, our Lord suddenly found Himself in the presence of ten lepers, who, while staying some distance away, as the law required,[492] raised their voices, saying: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."[493] They had just learned who He was and, knowing of Him by report, counted on His goodness no less than on His power, for obtaining a cure. Cut off from the rest of men by their horrible disease and by strict legal prescriptions, they gave themselves the comfort of pooling their sufferings and their modest resources.[494] The sight of them aroused a lively compassion in the Savior's soul. Wishing to try their faith, He merely replied: "Go, show yourselves to the priests," that is, to the priests of the district where they lived. To speak thus was implicitly to promise them a prompt cure, because, as we said above in connection with our Lord's first miracle on behalf of a leper,[495] the priests were officially charged with the duty of certifying that the disease had disappeared.

[491] Luke 9:52 f.
[492] Lev. 13:45 f.
[493] Luke 17:12–19.
[494] An association of the same sort is mentioned in 4 Kings 7:3.
[495] Matt. 8:4; Mark 1:44; Luke 5:14 (see Volume II, p. 193). Cf. Lev. 14:2–32.

Obedient to our Lord's command, they departed. But lo, on the way they suddenly perceived that they were cured. We may easily surmise their joy. Yet only one of them, impelled by a deeper thankfulness toward his Benefactor, felt the need of turning back immediately to thank Him at once. When he came to the Savior, he prostrated himself before Him, with his face to the ground, after the expressive manner of the East, thus showing the depth of his gratitude. But a remarkable fact is stressed by the Evangelist: this man, whose alacrity was so natural, but whose example was not imitated by his companions, although they had been cured at the same time as he, belonged to the race of Samaritans, so generally hostile to the Jews.[496] This circumstance heightened the merit of his act. Therefore Christ drew attention to the fact by a reflection of mingled joy and sadness: "Were not ten made clean? And where are the nine? There is no one found to return and give glory to God, but this stranger." They had "glorified God" after a fashion, as the Evangelist notes, but without troubling themselves to bring the avowal of their gratitude directly to Him through whom they had received the heavenly favor.

Although accustomed to human ingratitude, Jesus, by His words, gave expression to the pain and, so to speak, surprise which He felt at the conduct of these lepers. The favor He had granted to all of them was scarcely less than the gift of life. He was all the more pleased with the thankful Samaritan. Looking kindly upon him, He said to him: "Arise, go thy way; for thy faith hath made thee whole." It is Jesus who saved him; but his faith was the determining cause of the miracle.

[496] In like manner, in the time of Eliseus, the pagan Naaman came to the prophet and offered him thanks after being miraculously cured of leprosy (4 Kings 5: 15).

CHAPTER IV

Christ's Sojourn in Peraea

At this point we find, partially at least, the other Synoptics joining St. Luke in describing this period [497]—probably rather brief—of our Lord's public life.

Jesus had passed through Peraea before, on His various journeys to Jerusalem. Had He already exercised His ministry there? The sacred narratives hardly allow us to suppose so. We cannot with certainty connect with this province any episodes except the few we are now about to consider, which took place shortly before the feast of Dedication.

I. Discussion about Divorce; Parable of the Unjust Judge; Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican

Scarcely had our Lord crossed the Jordan and entered the territory of Peraea, when large crowds again gathered and followed Him. Profiting by their attachment, He taught them with His usual zeal [498] and, as previously in Galilee, confirmed His teaching by curing the sick who were brought to Him.

Even in this out-of-the-way province, as well as in the districts of Galilee, we see our Lord promptly assailed by His bitter enemies, the Pharisees, who nowhere leave Him at peace. Having decided to hasten His destruction, they are ceaselessly on the watch for some incident on which they

[497] Matt. 19:1–20:16; Mark 10:1–31; Luke 17:20–18:30.

[498] St. Mark uses the imperfect tense, thus indicating that the Savior devoted a considerable part of His time to the instruction of the multitudes.

might base a serious charge against Him. They now think they have found one.[499]

They came to Him and asked: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" This was a trap, as St. Matthew remarks. In His Sermon on the Mount [500] Jesus had expressly forbidden divorce. The two great contemporary Jewish theological schools were in complete disagreement on this point [501] and His enemies expected to place Him in contradiction with the school of Hillel, whose laxness was unbounded. Thus they hoped to involve Him in difficulties that would check the growth of His popularity. At that time there was no Jew who did not admit the validity and lawfulness of divorce. The difference of opinion concerned only the reasons which might justify it. So important was the question considered that the Talmud contains an entire tractate, entitled *Guittin,*[502] in which the subject is treated with all the punctiliousness and indiscretion of the rabbis. Did the questioners, in the almost certain event that Jesus would express Himself against divorce, have the ulterior purpose of making Him obnoxious to the tetrarch Antipas, who had repudiated his lawful wife to marry Herodias? Many commentators think so; but this hypothesis seems to us not well founded.

The Savior defeated His adversaries' maneuver by His reply, which is a model of wisdom and ability. He said to them:

"Have ye not read, that He who made man from the beginning, made them male and female? And He said: For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they

[499] Both St. Matthew (19:1–9) and St. Mark (10:1–9) relate the event. The latter's account is somewhat abridged and condensed.

[500] Matt. 5:31 f.

[501] See Volume II, pages 295 f.

[502] From the word *guet,* "repudiation."

two shall be in one flesh. Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

Let us closely follow this reasoning, which restores marriage to the ideal willed by God, plainly proclaims the indissolubility of that holy institution, and ends all the abuses that had crept in or had been tolerated by the Jewish theocracy regarding it. Jesus based His thesis upon two unanswerable arguments: the first consisted in an act performed by God Himself; the second, in a divinely inspired saying. When the Creator gave life to the first two members of the human family, He formed them in a state such that they were manifestly intended for marriage, but a marriage between one man and one woman. Their outer duality was to be lost in unity. Adam understood this at once, as appears from his evidently inspired words: [503] "This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. . . . Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife." [504] Eve had not been formed from clay, but taken from the very substance of the first man. This fact, as Adam, and Jesus too, conclude, shows the indissoluble character of marriage. The man and the woman, therefore, must remain permanently united, as they were before the separation performed by God.

This same characteristic is forcibly expressed in the further words of Adam's prophetic description, depicting, with a holy freedom of language, marriage as a most sacred union, which takes the future couple from the paternal and maternal firesides and joins them to each other in organic oneness. Who would presume to separate what the Creator has thus united? Jesus asks. Let no one pretend to have a right to destroy, by his whims or his evil passions, the sublime work of God! It is not, then, lawful for a man to separate from his wife.

[503] Hence Christ here justly attributes these words to God.
[504] Gen. 2:23 f.

Such is Christ's reply, based both on the natural and on the divine law.

The Pharisees were disconcerted for a moment. Then they offered an objection which, from their standpoint, presented a semblance of truth. "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command to give [to a wife] a bill of divorce, and to put her away?" For these Pharisees, Jesus was only an ordinary man. To His decision they oppose the authority of the great Hebrew lawgiver, who evidently could not have ordained a practice which God condemned. The legal text referred to by the Savior's adversaries is the following: "If a man take a wife, and have her, and she find not favor in his eyes, because he had discovered something blameworthy [505] in her, he shall write a bill of divorce and shall give it in her hand and send her out of his house." [506]

The bill of divorce, or, as the Jews called it, "the book of separation" (*sefer keritut*), was framed as follows: "Act of repudiation. On the . . . day of the month of . . . in the year . . . from the creation, I, . . . son of . . . , living in the city of . . . , in full liberty and without the least compulsion, have repudiated, have sent away, have driven out thee, . . . daughter of . . . , of the city of . . . , in such wise that thou belongest to thyself and art free to marry whom thou pleasest, without anyone being able to prevent thee, from this day forth, for ever." [507]

Our Lord easily refuted the objection, specious as it was. It sufficed to present in its true light the authorization granted by Moses. This was not at all a command or prescription, as the Pharisees had just called it, but a simple concession, the basis of which was a reason reflecting little glory on the Jews.

[505] This expression can refer only to grave reasons. The capricious interpretations given to it were an abuse of the term.

[506] Deut. 24:1.

[507] We translate merely the most important part. See Lightfoot, *Horae. Hebr.*, in Matt. 5:31; Buxtorf, *Synagoga Iudaica*, c. 29.

Jesus said: "Because Moses by reason of the hardness of your heart permitted you to put away your wives." The rudeness of their hearts, the inferior state of Hebrew civilization at that earlier epoch, a lamentable insensibility toward God's commands, a revolting selfishness: such were the reasons why Moses tolerated divorce. And that tolerance was granted especially for the purpose of restraining abuses.

Jesus takes pains to remind them that "from the beginning it was not so," and that, on the contrary, repudiation was an act opposed to the primitive will of God regarding marriage. Lastly, with royal majesty, He suppressed this temporary dispensation, which could not suitably subsist in the Kingdom of the Messias, and reëstablished the indissolubility of marriage in all its chaste beauty: "I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery." And He added, according to St. Mark: "If the wife shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery." [508]

The Protestants and the Orthodox Greeks, basing their claim upon the words, "excepting for the cause of fornication," which our Lord also inserted in His identical declaration in the Sermon on the Mount,[509] maintain both in theory and practice that Christ, while suppressing divorce in the other cases tolerated among the Jews, authorized it if either husband or wife was proved guilty of adultery. The Catholic Church has always protested against this teaching, which would make our Lord contradict Himself, since He had just forcibly declared that the Creator from the beginning indis-

[508] The passage in the First Gospel does not contain this last sentence, because, among the Jews, the wife did not have the right to demand divorce, although she did have this right among the Romans and Greeks.

[509] Matt. 5: 32.

solubly united husband and wife, and that, by virtue of the marriage itself, they form an inseparable organism, which no one has a right to disjoin.

The Savior added that, although under certain conditions Moses permitted divorce to the Hebrews, this was contrary to the divine institution and was by way of mere tolerance; He therefore wills that in His kingdom the Creator's primordial plan be strictly restored. The law which He thus promulgated had a universal and absolute import. If He had made one exception, His forceful argument would have fallen at once, destroyed by His own words, since He would be enunciating the principle that divorce can take place in certain cases. The concession made by Christ can be extended only to a simple separation of husband and wife, when one of them becomes grievously unfaithful. But even then the marriage bond preserves its full force, and a new marriage is absolutely forbidden and null. This clearly results from the parallel passages in St. Mark and St. Luke,[510] which mention the forbidding of divorce, but make no mention whatever of the clause "except it be for fornication." The same conclusion follows also from various texts of St. Paul, who categorically proclaims the utter indissolubility of Christian marriage.[511]

At the close of this conversation with the Pharisees, Jesus returned to the house where He was staying. Thereupon His inner circle of disciples, who had been among His hearers, with their usual candor told Him of the trouble with which His decision filled their minds. "If the case of a man with his wife be so, it is not expedient to marry." [512] So severe a matrimonial law frightened them; they were alarmed at the con-

[510] Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18.

[511] Rom. 7:2 f.; 1 Cor. 7:10 f., 39. On this question, see Perrone, *De Matrimonio Christiano,* Vol. III, cap. 2 and 3; Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Matthieu,* pp. 372 ff.

[512] Matt. 19:10; cf. Mark 10:10–12.

sequences which it entailed. Their remark was prompted by the imperfect sentiments of nature; but, in a way, it also proves that the disciples had interpreted their Master's words in the sense of a complete prohibition of divorce, even in case of unfaithfulness by husband or wife. And it gave rise to one of the Savior's most sublime lessons. He answered them, saying:

"All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs, who were born so from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs, who were made so by men; and there are eunuchs, who have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven. He that can take, let him take it."

The suppression of divorce seemed to the disciples so harsh and apt to aggravate the difficulties of marital life so much, that they deemed it preferable for a man to lead a celibate life. Christ enters into their thought; but with this selfish celibacy He contrasts the ideal of heavenly virginity, the standard of which He here raises very high, as He also did by the spotless purity of His whole life. He mentions in ascending order three categories of men vowed to continence: some by a bodily defect, others by the wickedness of their fellowmen, and still others for a supernatural reason.

In the first two cases there is question of forced virginity, which in itself has no merit. But those who remain virginal "for the Kingdom of Heaven," in order the more easily to enter therein, and, what is still better, to devote themselves to its spread by freeing themselves from all the hindrances that are created by the founding and maintaining of a family, thus sacrifice the flesh to the spirit and more easily rise to the perfection of the Christian life. With what reserve Jesus suggests this angelic existence! It is not the rule, but the exception. As it requires a more than ordinary virtue, no one should adopt it except after mature consideration, when

he is sure that he is truly called from above and that he can withstand the seductions of the world. Thus, then, marriage is a divine and holy institution; but virginity is a holier and more perfect state. Blessed are they whom our Lord has honored by inviting them to practice it!

Shortly afterwards [513] the Pharisees asked Christ, "when the Kingdom of God should come." They no doubt wished by this question to create a new embarrassment for Him. For about three years He had been announcing the proximate coming of that kingdom, and yet it seemed no nearer than in the first days of His preaching. They expected that in His reply He would probably set a date and if, at the time indicated by Him, the Messianic reign were not visibly inaugurated, it would be seen that no credit should be given to His pretended revelations and to the high office which He attributed to Himself.

Instead of directly answering this question, which at best was prompted by vain curiosity, the Savior deemed it more useful to point out the nature of the kingdom that was to come. He said to them: "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation; [514] neither shall they say: Behold here, or behold there. For lo, the Kingdom of God is within you." Interpreters are not in accord as to the exact meaning of these last words. "Within you" might mean "in your hearts" or "in the midst of you." The former of these translations seems less suitable here, since it can hardly be said that the Kingdom of God was in the hearts of the Pharisees. The second version is more in harmony with the situation, since Jesus, as Messias-King, had already inaugurated His reign. Whatever may be the true meaning, the Savior's words amount to this:

[513] St. Luke (17:20–37) is the only one to relate this incident. He does not exactly localize it, either as to time or place.

[514] Literally: "in a manner to be observed," that is, with theatrical display, brilliant signs, by which its installation would be clearly manifested.

Instead of being vainly concerned about the time when the Kingdom of God will appear, you should more profitably seek the means of belonging to it. As this kingdom is altogether spiritual, only gradually can it produce outward results easy to be observed and capable of determining the time of its inauguration by a precise date.

Our Lord then turned away from these insincere adversaries. But he profited by their question, to give His disciples some important instructions on the same subject. However, He took another point of view. Passing from the foundation of the Messianic kingdom to its consummation, He dwelt upon the dangers that would fill the last era of the world, thus putting Christians on their guard against them:

"The days will come when you shall desire to see one day of the Son of Man; and you shall not see it. And they will say to you: See here, and see there. Go ye not after, nor follow them. For, as the lightning that lighteneth from under heaven, shineth unto the parts that are under heaven, so shall the Son of Man be in His day. But first He must suffer many things, and be rejected by this generation. And as it came to pass in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat and drink, they married wives, and were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark; and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it came to pass in the days of Lot: they did eat and drink, they bought and sold, they planted and built. And in the day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man shall be revealed. In that hour, he that shall be on the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not go down to take them away; and he that shall be in the field, in like manner, let him not return back. Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose it, shall preserve it. I say to you: in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together;

the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. They answering, say to Him: Where, Lord? Who said to them: Wheresoever the body shall be, thither will the eagles also be gathered together." [515]

The subject here treated bears a likeness to that which the Savior developed at greater length in His discourse three days before His death, on the Mount of Olives, when, in the presence of some of the Apostles, He unfolded His predictions and instructions regarding the end of the world.[516] It was natural that He should repeat these important thoughts.

The teaching contained in this passage may be grouped under three heads. The Divine Master points out, first, what the end of time will be, and what He must undergo before it comes. It will be preceded by a period of anguish and tribulation for Christians, who, during those frightful hours, will desire to see "the day of the Son of Man," for whom they will long as for a sweet refreshment in the midst of their sufferings. That day, toward which their eyes will turn, may mean either the past, *i. e.,* the blessed moments when the first disciples enjoyed the visible society of Christ, or the future, the epoch of His glorious return to earth at the end of the world. Since, in the course of this address,[517] the words "the day of the Son of Man" are used three different times to indicate Christ's second coming, perhaps the second interpretation is the better. If so, Christ's words, "You shall not see it," would be an intimation to His disciples that His coming will not occur as soon as they might wish.

When we are in pain, we should be on our guard against the false hopes which at such times more easily possess us.

[515] Luke 17:22–37.
[516] Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21.
[517] Luke 17:24, 26, 30.

Our Lord warns His friends against the false Messiases, who were to make dupes of so many of the Jews. It will be utterly useless to run after them, since the coming of the true Christ for the last judgment will be sudden as lightning, and will at one and the same time be clear to the eyes of all men. Hence no one will need to be notified of His coming. Nevertheless for Christ Himself a day of deep humiliation and horrible torment will precede that day of glory and triumph. This is a necessity according to the divine plan: "He must suffer," as He had more than once announced.

The next warning corresponds to the thought that at the time of Christ's second coming He will find the world in a sad state of indifference. Two examples, taken from somber periods of sacred history emphasize this sinful indifference and the terrible character of the divine judgments. In Lot's time, as in that of Noe,[518] despite Heaven's warning, men continued to lead a carnal life, without a thought of conversion. Therefore, in one case they were punished by the Deluge, in the other case by fire. The generation living at the end of time will be no better prepared for God's judgments; the terrible sentence will come upon them in the midst of a false and fatal security.

In the third part of His instruction, Christ briefly describes the moral dispositions that alone can procure eternal salvation. By means of other concrete examples He shows with what alacrity and detachment men should leave everything at the supreme hour of His second coming, and hasten forth to meet Him without delay. Lot's wife met a miserable end for having looked back, in spite of God's command, upon Sodom and the things she had left there.[519] Lastly, two other details, taken from family life, dramatically express how, at

[518] Gen. 6:1–8; 19:1–29.
[519] Gen. 19:26; Wisdom 10:6–9.

the time of the final catastrophe, salvation or ruin will await men according to the difference of their moral dispositions, however alike their external conditions may be.[520]

The alarmed disciples then asked Jesus: "Where, Lord?" They wanted to know in advance where these events were going to occur. It was a question of mere curiosity, to which the Savior purposely gave only a vague answer: "Whereso-ever the body shall be, thither will the eagles also be gathered together." This is a proverbial saying, meaning that heaven's vengeance will reach the wicked at the second coming of the Messias, as birds of prey swoop down upon abandoned car-casses.

At this point St. Luke places the parable of the widow and the unjust judge, designed to show that, while Christians are awaiting Christ's coming at the end of time, and in order to escape the dangers that menace their salvation, they "ought always to pray,[521] and not to faint." Later, in the great dis-course to which we referred above, Christ again recommends ceaseless prayer, and that will be also on the occasion of His great coming.[522] He said:

"There was a judge in a certain city, who feared not God, nor regarded man. And there was a certain widow in that city, and she came to him, saying: Avenge me of my adversary. And he would not for a long time. But afterwards he said within himself: Al-though I fear not God nor regard man, yet because this widow is troublesome to me, I will avenge her, lest continually coming she weary me." [523]

[520] On hand-mills, operated by women, see Volume II, p. 584, and Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 21, figs. 1–3.

[521] Of course we should not unduly stress the meaning of the adverb *παντότε*, "always," which St. Luke uses in the passage with which he introduces the par-able. It is a popular hyperbole, applying less to the outward act than to the inner disposition, by virtue of which a truly Christian soul lives constantly in a spirit of prayer.

[522] Mark 13:33; Luke 21:36.

[523] Luke 18:1–5.

As in the other parables of the second group, the chief characters are here admirably described in a few words. The widow's persecutor is left in the background. Two details suffice to portray the unjust judge; yet the picture is complete. He fears neither God nor man. What good are we to expect from such a wicked magistrate, ever ready to pronounce judgment not according to law and justice, but with partiality and in conformity with his own interests? Before this despot comes a widow, the universally recognized type of whatever is weakest, least to be feared, and easiest to oppress.[524] This poor woman, with no weapon but her repeated petitions, succeeds in triumphing over the depraved judge. The latter's monologue with himself fully justifies the portrait of him given in the text. Even though a man be a professed atheist and pitiless toward others, yet in the end he will become wearied by persistent appeals and will yield to them.[525] For such a reason does the judge excuse himself, as it were, for rendering justice to the humble suppliant, whose constancy was thus rewarded.

The Savior then makes a direct application of this scene: "Hear what the unjust judge saith. And will not God revenge His elect who cry to Him day and night; and will He have patience in their regard? I say to you, that He will quickly revenge them. But yet the Son of Man, when He cometh, shall He find, think you, faith on earth?" [526]

Here we have a most convincing *a fortiori* argument. If a wicked, unjust judge is constrained to heed a repeated supplication because it is importunate, how much more certainly will the God of justice and mercy hear the persevering

[524] Cf. Ex. 22:22; Deut. 10:18; 27:19; Is. 1:17, 23; Ezech. 22:7; Mal. 3:5, etc.

[525] The verb ὑπωπιάζῃ (Vulg., *sugillet*) means to strike with the fist just below the eye. Possibly in the present passage it is used metaphorically to signify excessive annoyance.

[526] Luke 18:6–8.

prayers of His elect and come to their assistance in the hour of danger? The closing words of this passage are like a sorrowful cry from the heart of the Son of Man, at the thought that, in the day of His second coming, He will perhaps not find in a large number of souls that lively faith and persistent trust without which there is no persevering prayer.

The parable of the Pharisee and the publican is recorded in the Third Gospel [527] immediately after that of the unjust judge, and was probably spoken on the same occasion or soon after. The Evangelist indicates its purpose by a little introduction, in which he says that it was spoken "to some who trusted in themselves as just and despised others." These two traits obviously refer to the Pharisees and all those who were imbued with their spirit. The parable is as follows:

"Two men went up into the Temple to pray: the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee standing, prayed thus with himself: O God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this publican. I fast twice in a week; I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes towards heaven; but struck his breast, saying: O God, be merciful to me a sinner. I say to you, this man went down into his house justified rather than the other; because every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted."

Here again we have two portraits, drawn with delicate strength and truthfulness. The two persons of the parable are well-known types, taken from the opposite extremes of contemporary Jewish society. The first represents complete orthodoxy of faith and holiness, at least external, and meticulous observance of legal prescriptions. The second represents religious indifference and unceremonial conduct.

[527] Luke 18: 9–14.

Both are in the Temple, probably in the Court of Israel, in the midst of which stood the altar of holocausts.[528] Both are at prayer, standing up, according to the prevailing custom of the Jews, as of Orientals in general.[529] But what a difference in the subject of their supplications! The Pharisee's words do not deserve to be called a prayer. Though they have the outward form of an act of thanksgiving, he utters his own praises, being quite satisfied with his moral state. Mankind he divides into two categories. He himself forms the principal class, which is altogether perfect, while in the second class he contemptuously places "the rest of men." And according to him, what are they? He describes them by the use of three epithets which designate shameful vices: "extortioners, unjust, adulterers." Then, perceiving the publican standing some distance away, "he drags him into his prayer, making him to supply the dark background on which the bright colors of his own virtues shall more gloriously appear." [530] He then passes from his own person to his works. Having already mentioned the negative aspect of his so-called holiness, he describes its positive side, speaking with extreme self-satisfaction of his fasting [531] and his supererogatory tithes. St. Augustine rightly says: "Search his words for a single petition addressed to God; you will not find it. His intention was not to pray, but to praise himself." [532]

What a contrast in the publican's attitude. His words breathe humility and contrition for his sins. So great is his feeling of unworthiness, that he does not even dare to raise his eyes toward heaven, but strikes his breast, after the man-

[528] Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* Pl. 99, figs. 1 and 2.

[529] See 1 Kings 1:26; 3 Kings 8:22; 2 Par. 6:12; Matt. 6:5; Mark 11:25; Fillion, *op. cit.,* pl. 96, figs. 5 and 6; pl. 108, figs. 4, 6, 9; pl. 112, figs. 8, 11; pl. 116, fig. 4.

[530] Trench, *Notes on the Parables,* 11th ed., p. 495.

[531] On the fasting practiced by the Pharisees, see Matt. 6:16; 9:14.

[532] *Serm.,* 115.

ner of penitents the world over.[533] His short, simple, and sincere prayer is a sigh rising from the depth of his heart directly to the heart of God. The moral which Jesus draws from the parable is no less eloquent. He declares that the publican, upon leaving the Temple to return home, had received full pardon of his sins, whereas the haughty Pharisee went away more guilty than he had come. The moral axiom, "Every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted," is thus verified once more.[534]

II. Jesus and Little Children; Episode of the Rich Young Man; Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

In Peraea, shortly after our Lord entered it, there took place the charming episode of the blessing of little children.[535] This scene seems to have occurred indoors, for St. Mark says, at the close of his account, that the Savior "was gone forth into the way." Christ manifested so much kindness, and His reputation for holiness was so great, that several mothers brought their children to Him—very little children, according to the Greek text [536]—that He might "touch" them, that is, as St. Matthew explains, that He might "impose hands upon them" and offer a prayer for them which would bring them precious graces. The rulers of the synagogues and the rabbis were sometimes asked to bless children.[537] Imposition of hands as a sign of blessing goes far back into Jewish history; the Book of Genesis [538] shows us Jacob in this attitude when

[533] Cf. Nah. 2:7; Luke 8:52, etc.

[534] Cf. Matt. 23:12; Luke 14:11.

[535] The incident is related by the three Synoptics (Matt. 19:13–15; Mark 10:13–16; Luke 18:15–17). St. Mark, as usual in descriptions of this sort, is the most lifelike and complete.

[536] St. Matthew and St. Mark use the diminutive παιδία (Vulg., *parvuli*); St. Luke has βρέφη (Vulg., *infantes*), "sucklings."

[537] Buxtorf, *De Synagoga Iud.*, cap. 7.

[538] Gen. 48:14 f.

Joseph brought his two sons to receive the patriarch's blessing on his deathbed.

The Apostles, who regarded this step taken by the mothers as an act of importunity which would tire their Master, whose time and strength they thought should be conserved, somewhat roughly drove these humble women away. Their intention was good; but this is all that can be said in their behalf. They should have understood that, in reality, they were opposing our Savior' accomplishment of His mission toward an interesting portion of His mystical flock. This He at once made clear to them. St. Mark says that "He was much displeased" [539] and made this touching protest: "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come to Me; for the Kingdom of Heaven is for such. Amen I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter into it." He thus indicated why He was happy to see Himself surrounded by this innocent troop, and He profited by the occasion to recall to the Apostles' minds a lesson He had already given them some time previously,[540] about the need of possessing the moral qualities of little children if one would be worthy of the name of Christian. To make the lesson memorable, Jesus tenderly took these little ones into His arms,[541] blessed them, and imposed His hands upon them, as their mothers wished. Twice only in the Gospel [542] is there mention of the Savior's caresses, and in both cases they were reserved for little children. This is "one of the most beautiful and human traits" of Christ's nature.[543]

Our Lord had just left the house where He received hospitality in passing, and had taken a few steps on the road toward Jerusalem, when a young man came running up and

[539] This is the only time the Gospel narrative applies this expression to Christ.
[540] Matt. 18: 1–5.
[541] Ἐναγκαλισάμενος (Vulg., *complexans*).
[542] In this passage and in Mark 9: 35.
[543] J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des N. T.*, I, 155.

knelt down before Him.[544] He ran, that he might not lose this opportunity to ask the Divine Master a question which was occupying his mind. His posture before the Savior showed his deep respect for Him. The Evangelists, following their usual practice, do not tarry long over the antecedents of the central figure of this incident. St. Matthew tells us that he was a youth;[545] St. Luke remarks that he occupied an honorable rank.[546] In the course of the narrative we shall see that he possessed a considerable fortune and, what was more important, rare moral qualities.

"Good Master," he said to Christ, "what shall I do to possess everlasting life?" The question was a reasonable one. The young man understood that the great reward to which he aspired, eternal salvation, could be obtained only by meritorious deeds. In several passages of the Talmud the rabbis treated this point with their usual narrowness, pointing out the best means of becoming "sons of the age to come" or "worthy of the age to come." Who, they ask, will possess eternal life? "Rabbi Johanan said: 'He who adds the *Gueulla* [the prayer for redemption] to the other prayers of the day.' Rabbi Afhon said: 'He who honors old men.' Rabbi Eliezer said: 'He who recites Psalm 145 three time a day,' " etc.[547]

Perchance our young man was aware of these answers, and we may well suppose that they did not satisfy him. Many early commentators, among whom it is surprising to find St. Jerome, express the view that the young man did not approach our Lord with upright intentions. They make him out to be a tempter, like the hypocritical Pharisees,[548] and they

[544] We have these dramatic details from St. Mark. The episode as a whole is common to the three Synoptics (Matt. 19:16–30; Mark 10:17–31; Luke 18:18–30). St. Luke's account is somewhat condensed.

[545] Νεανίσκος (Vulg., *adolescens*).

[546] Ἄρχων, "chief." But the expression is rather vague. The Vulgate, by translating it *princeps*, exaggerates its significance.

[547] Wetstein, *Horae Hebr.*, Matt. 19:16.

[548] St. Jerome: *"Non voto discentis, sed tentantis."*

interpret all his words in the light of this preconceived idea. The whole account, however, seems to us to presuppose that he was in good faith, full of candor; otherwise, how could Jesus have "loved" him, as St. Mark says He did, and why should He have wished to attach him permanently to Himself? The suppliant in all sincerity desired to win Heaven. Under the impulse of grace, it seemed to him that some great sacrifice or heroic act would more quickly enable him to acquire the holiness that would assure his salvation. He therefore came to consult the Master, the prophet, the eminent man whom he venerated without yet being acquainted with Him.

The Savior's answer, at first glance, gives an impression of sternness: "Why dost thou call Me good? None is good but God alone." Jesus certainly was not refusing the epithet of praise addressed to Him; nor did He deny His divinity, as the Rationalists maintain. He spoke as Son of Man, and purposed above all to glorify His Father, without comparing Himself with Him, for "the question of His own person was not then involved." [549] He wished to remind His questioner that goodness in man comes only from the infinitely good God.[550]

After subjecting the young man to this first test, Jesus continued, replying directly to his question. "If thou wilt enter life," He said, "keep the commandments." "Which?" asked the young man, who was expecting a less general indication, since it was already quite clear to him that no one could reach Heaven without strictly fulfilling the divine law. The Savior

[549] Lagrange, *Évangile selon S. Marc*, p. 249.

[550] In St. Matthew's account, the young ruler says to our Lord: "Master [without any adjective, according to the best reading of the text], what good shall I do that I may have life everlasting?" And the Savior replies: "Why askest thou Me concerning good? Only God is good." This is a way of saying that the question is superfluous. In truth, since God alone is good in an absolute way, only one thing is really good: to be like God, to draw near Him by doing His will. The account by St. Mark and St. Luke gives a simpler and clearer meaning, and seems to report our Lord's words more exactly.

at once explained: "Do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not steal, bear not false witness, do no fraud, honor thy father and mother." In this enumeration, our Lord quotes only precepts of the second table of the Decalogue, all of them concerning conduct toward one's neighbor, precepts that one has more occasion to transgress. Evidently it is impossible to practice perfection without loving God and serving Him faithfully. On the other hand, it is no less certain that, under ordinary circumstances, one can win Heaven by obeying all the commandments of the Decalogue. But the young man had in mind a greater perfection. Therefore, somewhat disconcerted, he said: "Master, all these things I have observed from my youth. What is yet wanting to me?"

His dispositions were noble, and his avowal was genuine. Therefore the Savior, turning upon him one of His deep, penetrating looks,[551] which the Evangelists, especially St. Mark, mention from time to time,[552] allowed to arise in His divine heart a feeling of tenderness: "He loved him." [553] How it delights us to see Christ thus drawn like us to what is lovable and pure! But from those for whom He feels a greater affection, He requires in return more virtue and more sacrifices. Entering completely into the young man's thought, He says: "Yet one thing is wanting to thee. If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." Jesus was disposed to attach this young man to Himself definitely, as an intimate disciple, who would follow Him everywhere and who, in the society of the holiest and best of masters, would promptly acquire the perfection that would easily open Heaven to him.

The second of the conditions laid down by the Savior was

[551] Ἐμβλέψας, says St. Mark (Vulg., *intuitus*).
[552] See Volume I, pp. 428 f.
[553] Mark 10:21.

no doubt welcome to the youth. The first called for a complete renunciation. All three Evangelists tell us that he possessed great wealth. The test was too severe for him. Up to this time, in spite of his good qualities, his holiness had been more negative than positive, and his heart was attached to his wealth more than he himself suspected. Thus, the decision which he so earnestly desired produced a disastrous effect on him. He sighed deeply and, without a single word, went away desolate. It was hard to disobey Jesus, but harder yet to obey Him. Violently drawn in two opposite directions, that heart, lacking sufficient strength, let itself be drawn down by the weight of earthly possessions.

After a momentary silence, Jesus, who was saddened by the event, looking about Him [554] as if to observe the impression which this regrettable departure had left on the Apostles, said: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God." Such was the sad conclusion of the incident. The young man had advanced to the threshold of the Kingdom, but his wealth hindered his crossing it, and might even imperil his salvation.

Upon hearing this remark by their Master, the Apostles were amazed. They might well have been deeply impressed. Did not Christ seem to be excluding from Heaven a whole category of men, solely because of their social position? Hence the Savior, slightly modifying His thought so as to make its meaning more precise and to quiet the alarm which He read in His disciples' hearts and on their faces, gently said: "Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches, to enter into the Kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God." It is, therefore, not a question of riches as such, for the possession of wealth is not in itself a state of

[554] Περιβλεψάμενος (Vulg., *circumspiciens*). This detail is special to St. Mark.

sin or a cause of damnation, although it presents grave perils. Jesus excludes from His kingdom only those who are inordinately attached to their riches and who, so to speak, make them their end and place their whole affection in them.

Notwithstanding this attenuation, the disciples' alarm increased rather than diminished. Taken literally, the comparison used by the Savior to color His thought indicated a sheer impossibility. Can one imagine a camel, the largest domestic animal of Palestine, passing through the tiny hole in a needle? The figure seemed so strange to the early commentators that they strove to make it more presentable by substituting for the Greek word meaning "camel" another Greek noun meaning "cable," thus introducing a more natural similarity between the two terms of the comparison;[555] or they invented, for the needs of the occasion, a gate at Jerusalem, narrow and reserved for pedestrians, bearing the name of "the eye of a needle." At present no one would resort to such attempts to alter the Savior's words, on the ground of making them more acceptable. True, they express a paradox; but Jesus often used this form of speech in His teaching.[556] The same proverbial expression is found in use in other parts of Asia, in the Talmud, and in the Koran.[557] And in a subsequent text our Lord speaks of those who swallow a camel.[558] But He Himself now explains His words to the Twelve. Again turning a loving look upon them,[559] He reassured them, saying: "With men it is impossible; but not with God. For all things are possible with God." Therefore, with the support of God's

[555] Κάμηλος, "camel"; κάμιλος, "rope." The two words are pronounced alike.

[556] Volume II, p. 320.

[557] *Sur.* VII, 38: "Those who charge our signs with falsity and reject them, will see the gates of heaven closed against them, and they will not enter into paradise until a camel can pass through the eye of a needle." In India, where the largest beast of burden is the elephant, that is the animal spoken of as passing through the eye of a needle. See Wünsche, *Neue Beiträge,* p. 232.

[558] Matt. 23:24.

[559] Ἐμβλέψας, we read again in the Second Gospel.

help, detachment becomes possible to men of good will; the rich as well as the poor have facilities for gaining Heaven.

Simon Peter, heartened by this explanation, and speaking in behalf of all the Apostles, said joyfully: "Behold we have left all things and have followed Thee. What therefore shall we have?" The Savior had promised the rich young man a treasure in Heaven if he would give up all he possessed and join the Savior. Peter reminds our Lord that this was exactly what the Apostles did. He was not exaggerating. At a word from Jesus, they had immediately and without hesitation left everything and began to follow Him as humble, devoted servants. What special reward would He give them in return for their devotedness? The answer came promptly, consisting of magnificent promises: "Amen I say to you, that you, who have followed Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the seat of His majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

By the thoroughly Hebraic expression, "the regeneration," the Savior meant, as St. Mark and St. Luke explain to their Roman and Greek readers, "the world to come." This would be the epoch of the end of the world, when all nature, to assist in the glorification of the elect, will doff its perishable form, which is a sort of mourning garment, and put on an incorruptible garment of festivity.[560] This new birth of nature is called by the rabbis "the renewal of the world." [561] The Apostles will then have the glorious privilege of participating, as judges, in the powers of their Master, who will be the supreme judge of the good and the wicked. The Israel that will be subject to their jurisdiction is not that of ancient times, to which they belonged by birth, but a mystical Israel which prefigures the Church of Christ.

[560] Cf. Is. 66:22; Rom. 8:18–22; 2 Pet. 3:12 f.; Apoc. 21:1–5.

[561] Buxtorf, *Lexic. Talm.*, p. 712; Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums*, 2d ed., pp. 321 ff.

Thus far we have heard only part of the promise that Jesus made to His disciples. He continued, saying:

"There is no man that hath left house or brethren or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for My sake and for the gospel, who shall not receive an hundred times as much, now in this time, houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come life everlasting." [562]

We should note that now the promise goes beyond the Apostles. "Whoever" shall imitate their valiant renunciation and shall sacrifice for Christ what he holds most dear, will receive in recompense, even here below, every sort of grace and consolation. "A hundred times as much," is an Oriental way of designating the extremely abundant measure of these temporal and other blessings. At the beginning of the Church, neophytes often found it necessary to break the closest family ties in order to enlist in Christ's service; they were glad to find, in the great Christian community, brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, who soothed those pangs caused by a violent separation and filled the void of their heart. True, with this hundredfold Jesus announces persecutions, which, then especially, were inevitable. Suffering is an integral part of a Christian's lot on earth, and the Savior could not better honor His friends than in treating them as He Himself was treated.[563]

To these glorious promises Christ added, in the form of an antithesis, a proverbial saying that contains a serious warning: "But many that are first, shall be last; and the last, first." These somewhat enigmatic words are omitted in this passage by St. Luke, who quotes them on another occasion.[564] They

[562] Quoted from the Second Gospel, which is the most complete.
[563] See 1 Pet. 4:13.
[564] Luke 13:30.

express a general thought, susceptible of varied application. In the present context they are connected with the sad example just given by the rich young man. Even after beginning, one may stop on the way and run the risk of losing eternal life, while the most hardened sinners may be converted and acquire illustrious rank among the saints.

Our Lord then presented this truth under a different aspect, both grave and consoling, in the famous parable of the workers in the vineyard. St. Matthew is the only one to record it: [565]

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like to an householder, who went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And having agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour, he saw others standing in the market place idle. And he said to them: Go you also into my vineyard, and I will give you what shall be just. And they went their way. And again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did in like manner. But about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing, and he saith to them: Why stand you here all the day idle? They say to him: Because no man hath hired us. He saith to them: Go you also into my vineyard. And when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard saith to his steward: Call the laborers and pay them their hire, beginning from the last even to the first. When therefore they were come, that came about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first also came, they thought that they should receive more; and they also received every man a penny. And receiving it they murmured against the master of the house, saying: These last have worked but one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us that have borne the burden of the day and the heats. But he answering said to one of them: Friend, I do thee no wrong. Didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take what is thine, and go thy way; I will also give to this last even as to thee. Or, is it not lawful

[565] Matt. 20: 1–16.

for me to do what I will? Is thy eye evil,[566] because I am good? So shall the last be first and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen."

If we consider merely the outward appearance of the parable, everything is clear in the picture. It gives us interesting views of agricultural practices which, save for a few details, have scarcely changed in Palestine since that ancient time. It is to the market place that one goes at harvest time to hire the laborers for the harvest of grain or grapes. One *denarius* (about eighteen cents)—which term in our English version is rendered by "penny"—was an amply sufficient daily wage in our Lord's time. The hours of the day were reckoned from sunrise to sunset. The first hour would be about six o'clock in the morning, the third about nine o'clock, the sixth about noon; the ninth hour would be about three o'clock in the afternoon; the eleventh hour about five o'clock in the evening. At each of these hours the owner of the vineyard went to the market place to look for additional laborers, because the work was urgent and he did not wish to lose any of his crop. He agreed upon the exact wage only for the first group of laborers thus hired; to the others he merely promised to pay what was fair.

An explicit article of the Mosaic Law enjoined that whoever hired laborers, should pay them on the same day, before night, because they might have immediate need of the money.[567] It was by virtue of this prescription that the laborers received their pay as soon as their work was finished. The owner of the vineyard kept his promise to the laborers whose services he had engaged at the third hour. But that aroused in the men who had borne "the burden of the day and the heats"—a particularly heavy burden in the East at

[566] This phrase here symbolizes envy, which supposes evil looks cast upon our neighbor's success or advantages.

[567] Deut. 24: 15.

vintage time—a hope that they would receive more than the wage agreed upon. Hence their surprise and disappointment when they received only one *denarius* each. In reply to their complaints, the owner advanced two reasons that fully justified his conduct: the agreement freely made in the morning between the laborers and himself, and his undeniable right to use his money as he pleased.

Commentators are generally agreed that, in the interpretation of the parables, all the details are far from being of equal importance, and that certain ones serve merely as ornaments. This is especially true in the present case. Here the dominant idea seems to be that God, figured by the rich owner, keeps His promises faithfully to those who labor in His service, and that He gives all of them without exception, at whatsoever moment of their life they may have begun their labor, a just recompense in exchange for their fatigues. But He remains master of His gifts and, since no one is forgotten in their distribution, no one has a right to complain about the measure in which they are distributed. Let each one, therefore, receive his own wage thankfully, without envious looks at those who receive more.

Another lesson is this: not all men are called to salvation and holiness at the same period of life. For some the divine call is heard at the first hour, in childhood; others hear it in youth; still others when they have reached maturity; and others only when the signs of approaching death appear. Blessed are the workers of the first hour, who have lived only for God! Blessed also those who, at whatever hour of life they are called, correspond to grace and hasten to their Savior, to labor with Him and for Him.[568]

[568] For a more detailed application of the parable, see Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Matthieu,* pp. 388–390.

SIXTH PERIOD

From the Feast of Dedication to Christ's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

This period comprises about three months, from the middle of December to the beginning of April. We have but imperfect data upon it, some furnished by St. John, others by the Synoptics. The information that has come down to us is, however, of special value, not only because it concerns the closing events of our Lord's public life, but also because it has a direct importance. This is true in the case of the discourse we are about to consider, and in the resurrection of Lazarus.

I. Jesus Testifies in the Temple and Retires across the Jordan [569]

Only two months had passed since our Lord's previous visit to Jerusalem, at the time of the feast of Tabernacles. We again find Him in the Holy City on the occasion of another religious festival, a popular one, although it ranked only as a secondary feast and was of comparatively recent date. It was called the Dedication,[570] because it commemorated the solemn purification of the Temple by Judas Machabeus in the year 165 B. C., by way of public penance for its sacrilegious profanation by the impious king Antiochus Epiphanes of Syria three years before.[571] It was also called the Feast of

[569] Everything in this passage is special to the Fourth Gospel (John 10:22–42).

[570] In Greek, τὰ ἐγκαίνια (Vulg., *Encaenia*), "renewal"; in liturgical language, "dedication."

[571] See 1 Mach. 1:20–29; 4:36–59; 2 Mach. 1:9–18; 10:1–8; Josephus, *Ant.*, XII, vii, 6 f.

Lights,[572] on account of the joyous illuminations that accompanied it in Jerusalem and throughout Palestine. It was celebrated on the 25th Casleu, that is, in the latter part of December. This date explains why the Evangelist shows us our Lord, not as usual in the Temple courts, but in the covered portico called Solomon's Porch because, according to an ancient tradition, it had been part of the majestic edifice built by that king. It was situated in the easternmost part of the building, and gave access to the Women's Court.[573] A pilgrimage to Jerusalem was not of obligation on the feast of Dedication, as it was on the feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles; but Jesus had definitely quit Galilee and decided to make His last revelations in the Temple.

No sooner was He recognized, than He was surrounded by a large number of Jews, who barred His way,[574] determined by all means to obtain from Him the exact answer they wanted. They were His avowed enemies, as the word "Jews" habitually signifies in St. John's Gospel. They rudely asked Him: "How long dost Thou hold our souls in suspense? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." These words show a keen impatience, but an impatience that is unfriendly, that has only one aim, namely, to force from Jesus some compromising declaration. This is why they ask for a plain, clear reply.

In all sincerity He tells them that He has manifested His nature and office for a long time past. Yet it is true that, outside of the Apostolic circle, He had openly disclosed Himself as the Messias to no one except the Samaritan woman and the man born blind.[575] The great mass of Jews entertained a false notion of the Redeemer and His office. This

[572] Τὰ *φῶτα*. In Hebrew it was called *Hhanukah*, from the root *hhanak*, "to consecrate." The Jews of to-day still celebrate this solemnity. See Coypel, *Le Judaïsme*, pp. 224 ff.

[573] Cf. Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 84, figs. 1 and 2.

[574] Ἐκύκλωσαν: "they form a circle around Him."

[575] John 4:26; 9:37.

fact had prompted our Lord to veil His dignity to some extent. Moreover, His relations with His fellow-Jews, especially with the people of Jerusalem, had long since shown Him that they persisted in not believing in Him, in spite of His miracles and revelations. It is, therefore, to enemies that He now replies. Briefly He recalls His previous affirmations, His brilliant deeds, and the unbelief of the Jews, which nothing could overcome. The first part of His discourse on this occasion is as follows:

"I speak to you, and you believe not; the works that I do in the name of My Father, they give testimony of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep. My sheep hear My voice; and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them life everlasting; and they shall not perish for ever, and no man shall pluck them out of My hand. That which My Father hath given Me, is greater than all; and no one can snatch them out of the hand of My Father. I and the Father are one." [576]

Those proud Jews, who insolently urged Jesus to declare what He was, could now be satisfied, for He proclaimed not only His Messianic character, but also His divinity. This He did with no less force than clearness, and also with a noble calmness which contrasts with their malicious impatience. What a wealth of thought in those few lines! Jesus recalled to His adversaries' minds the allegory of the Good Shepherd, which He had spoken two months before in that same Temple and which had so deeply impressed all who heard it that no one had forgotten it.[577]

The words, "I and the Father are one," mean, according to the full force of the Greek text,[578] one single thing, an identical substance, one only God. Herein we have the fun-

[576] John 10:25–30.
[577] John 10:19.
[578] "Εν, in the neuter (Vulg., *unum*).

damental doctrine of Christianity, enunciated in the simplest and most categorical terms. This is the culminating point of our Lord's preaching.

What will the Jews, who showed themselves so eager to know exactly who He was, do now? Will they ask for further explanations? That would be useless, since they well understood the import of His words. Will they acknowledge Him to be the Messias? Quite to the contrary. For the second time [579] they pick up stones, intending to stone Him as a public blasphemer. From now on, in fact, they are unable to advance any argument against Him except that of brutal, criminal violence.

Facing the storm with lofty dignity, Jesus said to them, in delicate irony: "Many good works I have showed you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?" His miracles could not be denied; the way He connected them with His Father's almighty power made their authority still more incontestable. Nevertheless, those marvelous works, unique in history, works which should have led all men to Him who performed them, did but make His enemies' hatred the fiercer. They replied: "For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God." They disdainfully refused to acknowledge that they were wrong in seeking to make an attempt on His life. But they comprehended His words aright. Still maintaining His calm demeanor, Jesus continues His revelation and proves, first by an argument taken from the Bible, that He has a strict right to call Himself the Son of God. He said:

"Is it not written in your law: [580] I said you are gods? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God was spoken, and the

[579] Cf. John 8:59.

[580] The words "in your Law" here stand for all the books of the Old Testament, the first part of which was the Mosaic Law contained in the Pentateuch.

Scripture cannot be broken; do you say of Him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world: Thou blasphemest, because I said: I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though you will not believe Me, believe the works; that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." [581]

Granted the inspiration of the Sacred Books, the argument is simple and conclusive. In a passage in the Book of Psalms,[582] the Lord, speaking to the regularly constituted judges of Israel, calls them gods because, in a sense, they participated in the divine authority. But what were these simple officials compared with Jesus, whom God the Father had manifestly made His ambassador and representative, had declared to be His Son and Anointed One, by miracles that undeniably attested His nature and dignity? The name of God suited Him a thousand times more.

Although Jesus by His royal attitude and enlightening words did on that day make the stones drop from His enemies' hands, yet He did not succeed in extinguishing their malice, which became more and more grim. At the very least they wanted to seize Him and drag Him before the Sanhedrin, to accuse Him of blasphemy. But He escaped from them and disappeared in the crowd, as He had done once before.[583] He thought it well to leave the city for a while, since He would find it impossible to exercise His ministry there, where His enemies' hostility had now reached its height. He sought refuge in Peraea, where He had recently made a short visit.

The last three months of His public life were passed almost entirely in that quiet region where it began.[584] The Pharisees had only a moderate influence there, and did not

[581] John 10:34–38.
[582] Ps. 81:6.
[583] John 8:59.
[584] John 1:28–51.

disturb His repose. He was welcomed kindly; the memory of the testimony which the Precursor had rendered to Him in those districts was still very much alive. Many people of the region came to Him because, they said, "John indeed did no sign; but all things whatsoever John said of this man were true." By these words they set forth the two reasons for their belief in Jesus as the promised Messias: His numerous miracles, and the correctness of the Baptist's estimate of Him, as proved by deeds.

II. The Raising of Lazarus [585]

In the almost unanimous view of commentators and theologians the raising of Lazarus is the greatest of all the miracles performed by Christ during His public life. A man four days dead is brought back to life by a simple word. The event took place almost at the gates of Jerusalem and was observed by numerous witnesses, many of them unfriendly to Christ. The miracle was immediately followed by important consequences. The glory of Jesus was manifested, and many Jews believed in Him; but, for this very reason, His enemies redoubled their hate and fury, and hastened the execution of their murderous project. The narrative is unique in its kind in the Gospels; it is truly worthy of its subject. No other miracle of the Savior is told with such completeness, with all its principal and accessory details. The beauty and freshness of the narrative are incomparable. Nowhere else, among the biographers of Christ, is the art of literary expression so perfect, even to the smallest detail. The personages especially are admirably drawn: Jesus, so divine and human, so loving; the Apostle Thomas, with his somber but valiant words; Martha and Mary, with the nicest differences of their unlike characters; the Jews, who are not softened even by the Savior's

[585] John 11: 1–56.

tears and those of most of the bystanders. Lazarus alone is left in the background.[586]

The transparent truthfulness of the account is as outstanding as its beauty. A large number of minute details, which would hardly have been invented, show that the Evangelist was a trustworthy eyewitness, relating what he saw with his own eyes and heard with his ears. "Each step and movement of the Son of God, His words, His grief, His emotion, His tears, all that was innermost . . . remained indelible in the heart" [587] of the sacred writer, who recorded it with scrupulous fidelity. The date of the miracle is not indicated, but from the place it occupies in the Fourth Gospel, it must have taken place between the feast of Dedication and the last Passover of our Lord's life.

The preliminary circumstances are set forth at considerable length. The Savior had been in Peraea for some time, when a messenger came to Him in haste from Bethania, the bearer of sad news. "Lord," he said, "behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." The friend so tenderly loved [588] was Lazarus.[589] His sisters, Martha and Mary, as we saw before,[590] were piously attentive to the Divine Master, each of them according to her disposition. It is probable that Lazarus had been sick for some time; but the exact nature of his illness is not specified. His condition suddenly became critical. Then it was that Martha and Mary, in their distress, sent Jesus an urgent, though indirect and discreet appeal, which manifests their complete trust in Him. Would the all-powerful Miracle-

[586] Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean*, p. 218.

[587] Baunard, *L'Apôtre S. Jean*, p. 70.

[588] The word in the Greek text is φιλεῖς, expressive of tender affection. Farther on, when the Evangelist speaks of Christ's friendship for Lazarus' sisters, he uses the verb ἀγαπᾶν, which indicates a less intense sentiment. The nuance is very delicate.

[589] The same name as that of the poor man in the parable (Luke 16:20). It is an abbreviation of *'El 'azar*, which means: "God has helped."

[590] Luke 10:38–42.

worker, who loved their brother and had cured so many sick people, let him die? Like the Savior's mother at Cana,[591] they did not insist; they merely pointed out that Lazarus was in danger of death.

The answer which Christ sent back by the messenger was comforting, but equivocal. "This sickness is not unto death," He said; "but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it." These words seemed to mean that Lazarus would not die of his present sickness, and this is the sense which the Apostles must have given the words upon hearing them. But our Lord had in mind the final result of the sickness, that is, the glory which the temporary death of His friend would procure for God, and also for Himself, the Miracle-worker. It was one of Christ's mottoes that all should redound to His Father's glory. The Evangelist's remark, "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister Mary and Lazarus," shows that the Savior was not indifferent to the danger of the sick man or to the grief of his sisters.

He stayed in Peraea two days after receiving the sad message. This He did because He did not wish to anticipate the hour fixed by the will of His heavenly Father.[592] Furthermore, His supernatural knowledge revealed to Him that Lazarus was already dead at the time the messenger arrived with word that his life was in danger. His death took place four days before. By adding the time required for the messenger to go from Bethania to our Lord in Peraea (one day), and the two days that Christ still remained in that province, and the day that He needed to come to Bethania, we see that Lazarus must have breathed his last shortly after the departure of the messenger.

When the two days had elapsed, Jesus said to His Apostles: "Let us go into Judea again." The disciples themselves

[591] John 2:3.

[592] "Christ is never in haste, because He is always sure." Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 314.

had noted the serious perils that threatened their Master in Jerusalem and the neighboring district. Therefore, when He acquainted them with His plan to return to Judea, they respectfully and affectionately remonstrated, saying: "Rabbi, the Jews but now sought to stone Thee; and goest Thou thither again?" With a few kind words, in figurative language which is easy to understand, He endeavored to calm their fears. Answering them, He said: "Are there not twelve hours of the day? If a man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if he walk in the night, he stumbleth, because the light is not in him." The twelve hours referred to stand for the whole course of Christ's life, especially the period of His public ministry. Although for Him the day was drawing to a close, yet He still goes on in full light and has no need to dread the snares of His enemies. God is with Him and protects Him. His hour has not yet come, and He can go to Jersualem without misgiving.

Still speaking metaphorically, He added: "Lazarus our friend sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." The Apostles, interpreting these words literally, said: "Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well." As experience shows, in cases of serious illness the return of sleep is often a presage of cure. The old rabbis, who sometimes engaged in medicine, mention this among the ten symptoms which they regard as favorable.[593] The Apostles' misunderstanding was therefore quite natural. But some of them might have recalled that at the house of Jairus the Savior had used the word "sleep" when speaking of a death that was promptly followed by a resurrection.[594]

Jesus quickly put an end to their mistake by saying: "Lazarus is dead." Then, in a few words, He showed them that a happy consequence for them was to result from this

[593] Lightfoot, *Horae Hebr., h. l.*

[594] Matt. 9:24.

death: "I am glad, for your sakes, that I was not there, that you may believe. But let us go to him." The wonderful miracle that He was going to perform in His Apostles' presence would increase their faith; and this increase was not at all useless, since in a few weeks they would be desolate before the tomb of their beloved Master.

Thomas, seeing that Jesus had decided to return to Judea, said to the other disciples: "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." The Twelve were aware of the Jews' mortal enmity towards the Savior, and they did not doubt but that they, too, would be made to feel its effects. Yet they accepted it all in advance, with a generous love. But Thomas here appears to us with a somber temperament, seeing the dark side of things. The Master's clear assertion did not convince him; he thought that all the members of the Apostolic College were doomed to martyrdom in the near future.

Our Lord, then, left Peraea again with His close disciples, crossed the Jordan, climbed the mountainous mass that separates this river from Jerusalem, and reached Bethania after a tiring day's journey. He stopped at the entrance to the village, some little distance from the house of Lazarus and his sisters. The town of Bethania was located, as the Evangelist states very exactly,[595] fifteen stadia (about two miles) from Jerusalem,[596] at the place where it is still located to-day. But it has lost its ancient name and is now called, in Arabic, El Azarieh, in memory of its most famous inhabitant. It stands half-way up the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, in a tranquil little nook, surrounded by almond trees, carobs, olive trees, and fig trees. It is not devoid of charm, and by its quietness was wonderfully well suited to offer Christ a place of refuge whenever He came to Jerusalem for the religious festivities. To-day it is nothing more than a miserable hamlet

[595] John 11: 18.

[596] The Greek stadium was equal to about 600 feet.

with thirty or forty large, ugly houses, inhabited by about three hundred Mussulman Arabs. The considerable ruins which dominate it, are very probably only the remains of a tower erected to fortify a monastery that once stood in the neighborhood of the tomb.[597] Not far from the tower is a little underground hall, which is reached by a staircase of twenty-six steps. It is called the tomb of Lazarus. Whether it truly merits this name is questionable. What is certain is that since the fourth century there has been venerated at Bethania a crypt which was supposed to have witnessed the raising of Lazarus. Above this crypt was built a church that is referred to by many pilgrims.

Lazarus had died four days before Jesus reached Bethania. According to Eastern usage, his burial took place a few hours after his death. A large number of Jews, most of whom probably came from Jerusalem, were gathered about Martha and Mary to offer the customary condolences. The Jews, formalists like all Orientals, have always had their mourning etiquette, and have rigorously adhered to it. Upon the return of the funeral procession, the two sisters entered the house and there sat upon the ground, with their feet bare and their heads veiled; the visits of condolence then began. Their friends, seated near them, showed their sympathy by deep sighs, but without speaking, unless they themselves should make some remark: thus did custom decree. The first seven days especially were devoted to these visits and were considered as a period of more solemn mourning.[598] The presence of all these visitors at Bethania was providential, for it would provide the

[597] See Guérin, *Déscription de la Palestine, La Judée*, I, 170; Chauvet and Isambert, *Syrie, Palestine*, p. 379; *La Palestine*, by Professors of Notre-Dame de France, 2d ed., p. 226; de Vogué, *Les Églises de la Terre Sainte*, p. 335.

[598] Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean*, p. 225. Cf. Buxtorf, *Synagoga Iudaica*, xxxv; Keil, *Biblische Archäologie*, II, 105; Nowack, *Lehrbuch der hebr. Archäologie*, I, 193–198; Schegg, *Bibl. Archäologie*, p. 633. A large number of ancient practices are still in vogue among the Jews. See Stauben, *Scènes de la Vie Juive en Alsace*, pp. 92 ff.; Coypel, *Le Judaïsme, Esquisse des Mœurs Juives*, pp. 157–162.

raising of Lazarus with incontestable witnesses, since many of them, as we shall see, were unfriendly to our Lord.

As soon as Martha learned of Jesus' arrival, she ran to meet Him, without informing Mary, whom she left with the visitors. It has been remarked that the characters of the two sisters, as manifested in the episode here related by St. John, is quite the same as in the little scene which St. Luke already depicted. Here we have the same Martha, with her eager activity, engaged in external matters; we have also the same Mary, outwardly more calm and restrained, but more given to inner reflection. When Martha came to the Savior, there followed between them a touching dialogue, remarkable from every point of view. Without saying so in plain terms, she wished to tell her Divine Friend that He could raise her brother to life. Jesus affects not to understand this phase of the question, for He desires, according to His custom, to prepare for the miracle and have it merited, by arousing faith. They speak of general things, which Martha, in spite of her subtlety, does not succeed in making specific in the sense she desired.

She herself began the conversation by saying to Jesus, in a tone of deep sadness: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." She was not uttering a complaint, but a sorrowful regret; for it seemed to her impossible that, had Jesus arrived in time, He would not have rescued Lazarus from death. Developing the act of faith which she had so well begun, she added: "But now also [*i. e.,* even after Lazarus' death] I know that whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee." All without exception; consequently, as she delicately insinuates by this general expression, even the resurrection of her brother. But, as some early and recent interpreters have thought, perhaps the idea which Martha had of Jesus' power was not altogether free from imperfection. She seems to suppose that He needed to implore

the divine assistance to perform the great miracle which she tacitly asked of Him.

Jesus replied: "Thy brother shall rise again." This was a word of hope, but very general in the present case, since it might equally well refer to the universal resurrection at the end of the world. Martha therefore endeavors to have it made more precise. She said: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Belief in the resurrection was at that time very commonly held by the Jews.[599]

But it was not so distant a resurrection of Lazarus that Martha's heart then desired. Jesus at once rose to higher realms and answered Martha with a glorious revelation, the truth of which was to be attested by the miracle He was about to perform. He said to Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live. And every one that liveth, and believeth in Me, shall not die for ever."

The Fourth Gospel records several remarkable sayings of the Savior, beginning with the emphatic words, "I am": for example, "I am the bread of life"; "I am the light of the world"; "I am the way and the truth and the life."[600] But none of them surpasses the present one in loftiness, in theological importance, and in sublime beauty, accompanied as it is by a luminous commentary, which means: Death has no real sway over those who believe in Me; he who loses his life, will find it again, thanks to Me; he who possesses it, will never lose it. Sin brought death into the world; but Jesus has conquered it. The wounds it has inflicted are promptly healed, for the life of the faithful, seemingly interrupted and broken, flourishes again in a better world, where it is life in a truer sense than before.

[599] Cf. Dan. 12:2; 2 Mach. 7:9, 14; Langen, *Das Judenthum in Palästina zur Zeit Christi*, pp. 338 ff., 500 f.; Bloch, *La Foi d'Israël, ses Dogmes, son Culte*, pp. 38–46.

[600] John 6:35; 8:12; 14:6.

"Believest thou this?" asked our Lord. By this sudden question, He led Martha to make an explicit act of faith in the doctrine He had just revealed to her. Without the least hesitation, she firmly replied: "Yea, Lord, I have believed that Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, who art come into this world." This profession of faith recalls that made by St. Peter at Capharnaum and at Caesarea Philippi.[601] Yet Martha had not obtained—at least so she thought—the favor she so earnestly desired, though not venturing to express her wish in explicit terms.

Having nothing further to add, Martha went to inform her sister, who was unaware of Jesus' arrival. "The Master is here, and calleth for thee," she said to Mary in a low voice, so as not to attract the attention of the others present, many of whom, as she knew, were ill-disposed towards the Savior. Mary arose at once and left the house to go to our Lord. The visitors, supposing she had gone to her brother's tomb to pour forth her sorrow there, followed her out of sympathy. The visiting of graves, especially during the first days after burial, was as much a custom among the ancient Jews as it is with us. In the Orient the women especially practice this custom. They sometimes pass many hours in the cemetery and give way to every manifestation of violent grief at the grave of their relatives.[602]

As soon as Mary reached Jesus, she cast herself at His feet, saying: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Martha had already spoken the same words. This may have been owing to the fact that the two sisters had frequently made this sorrowful remark to each other during the last days of Lazarus' illness. Mary's deep feeling prevented her from saying more. Martha, less impressionable and more mis-

[601] John 6:69 f.; Matt. 16:16.

[602] See Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, pp. 102 ff.; Fillion, *Essais d'Exégèse*, pp. 302–304, and *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 28, fig. 1; pl. 16, fig. 9.

tress of her feelings, had been able to converse with the Savior; her sister poured forth her broken heart in sobs. The visitors also began to cry aloud, overcome by what has been called the contagion of tears.

At sight of this grief, Jesus was deeply moved. "He groaned in the spirit, and troubled Himself," says the Evangelist with force and psychological exactness. The Greek word corresponding to the former of these two verbs [603] indicates here, as in classical authors, displeasure and indignation. The substantive which is joined with it [604] localizes this movement of human passion, restricting it to our Lord's soul. The words, "He troubled Himself," show that there was nothing merely passive in the holy soul of Christ, and that all His emotions remained constantly under His most absolute control.[605] What was the reason for this sorrowful groaning and voluntary perturbation? On this delicate point, interpreters are of various opinions. Some, following Origen and St. John Chrysostom, suppose that Jesus was displeased at allowing Himself to be thus overcome by feeling. It is more natural to think that the Savior, moved by the deep grief which He saw break out around Him, was angry at the various sorts of powers—the devil, sin, death—which had brought so much grief and suffering upon the earth. Whatever hypothesis may be accepted, we see Him like a valiant warrior stirring himself to the combat with death and the tomb. To console Martha, He had recourse to words; Mary He consoles by a deed.

Addressing the two sisters, He asked to be brought to the tomb where Lazarus was buried: "Where have you laid him?" "Lord, come and see," they replied. Deep sorrow is expressed in these few words. "And Jesus wept," we then

[603] Ἐνεβριμήσατο (Vulg., *infremuit*). See Étienne, *Thesaurus Graecae Linguae*, under the words βρέμω and ἐμβριμάω.

[604] Πνεύματι (Vulg., *spiritu*).

[605] See St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, pars. 3, q. 18, a. 6.

read in the Gospel. This affecting phrase is one of the most beautiful in the whole Bible. In this place the Greek verb [606] denotes silent tears, in contrast with the sobs of Mary and the Jews.[607] One day Jesus weeps aloud, on contemplating the sad moral state of His people and the punishment which threatened them.[608] We are glad to see that the Word Incarnate did not consider Himself as being above weeping, which, after all, manifests one of the finest sides of human nature.

Some of the Jews present said: "Behold how He loved him." Others made a harsh and odious remark, saying: "Could not He that opened the eyes of the man born blind, have caused that this man should not die?" From their lips we at least receive an important avowal: they recognized the reality of the marvelous cure which had been officially verified by the religious authorities at Jerusalem itself,[609] and which, these several months later, still engaged the public mind. They might have cited the two resurrections that Jesus had already performed; but those miracles were wrought at an earlier date and took place in Galilee. For these two reasons they offered less interest to inhabitants of Jerusalem, who may not even have known of them.

At that moment the Savior groaned again, this time stirred perhaps by these murmured affronts which denoted an implacable hatred, ready to put a false interpretation upon the most delicate feelings. The tomb at which the Divine Master presently arrived, is briefly described. It was a family vault, excavated in the rock, like those tombs still to be seen in large numbers in the environs of Jerusalem. Some of them are on a level with the ground and are entered through a vertical

606 Ἐδάκρυσεν (Vulg., *lacrymatus est*).
607 Κλαίουσαν, κλαίοντας (Vulg., *plorantem, plorantes*).
608 Luke 19: 41.
609 John 9: 1–41.

doorway;[610] others are below the surface of the ground and are reached by steps.[611] A large stone closed the entrance, to prevent night robbers from stripping the corpse and to keep wild animals from devouring it. Beyond the stone was usually a more or less spacious room, its walls having lateral niches to accommodate the bodies of the deceased.[612] In case of a large family, the tomb sometimes contained several rooms, connected by underground passage ways.[613]

"Take away the stone!" Jesus ordered. At these words Martha, supposing the Savior wished the tomb opened merely for a last look upon the features of His beloved friend, was unable to repress her sisterly feeling of decency and anguish. "Lord," she said, "by this time he stinketh, for he is now of four days." To her affection for her brother it was repugnant that a number of by-standers should observe the ravages which death must have produced upon her brother's body. It is evident that she did not yet surmise Jesus' intention, though she had just asked a miracle of Him. Probably the body had been embalmed, as was the custom in rich families; not in the elaborate manner of the Egyptians, but according to the Jewish method, which consisted simply in a covering of powdered fragrant spices. This only slightly delayed the process of decay. Jesus at once reassured Martha by saying: "Did I not say to thee, that if thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God?" This He had told her in effect, by the messenger who brought Him the news of Lazarus' illness.

The stone closing the entrance to the sepulchre was then removed. The moment was a solemn one. We may easily imagine the emotion that filled all present. Jesus, raising His eyes

[610] Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* pl. 21, figs. 6, 7, 8; pl. 23, fig. 4.
[611] *Ibid.,* pl. 24, fig. 2.
[612] *Ibid.,* pl. 20, fig. 5; pl. 24, fig. 3.
[613] *Ibid.,* pl. 20, fig. 7; pl. 21, fig. 1.

to Heaven, as though to enter into closer communication with His Father, uttered this sublime prayer; it is not a prayer of petition, like our prayers, but one of anticipatory thanksgiving, so certain was He of His powers, so little did He fear that His confidence would be belied by the event: "Father, I give Thee thanks, that Thou hast heard Me. And I knew that Thou hearest Me always; but because of the people who stand about have I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

The last words clearly stress the purpose of the miracle which Jesus is about to perform, and they give His act the character of a decisive proof. It will be seen whether God is truly with Him, as He repeatedly affirmed, and whether He has received from Heaven the Messianic mission which He so positively claimed.

After finishing His invocation, our Lord turned toward the tomb and in a loud voice, signifying a will confident of itself, cried out: "Lazarus, come forth!" [614] And presently "he that had been dead came forth." The linen bandages about his arms and legs may have been closely wrapped around each member, after the Egyptian manner; or perhaps they covered the body rather loosely. In either case, Lazarus could, with some difficulty, take a few steps to come forth from the tomb. Jesus then said to those standing by: "Loose him, and let him go." In their fright and amazement, they did not think of rendering him this service; only the Miracle-worker had remained calm.

By this simple detail the Evangelist concludes in an abrupt way his description of the most brilliant miracle performed by our Lord. Not a word does he add about the joy of the two sisters or the ovation given to Jesus; nothing about Lazarus or his subsequent life. Independent of all other

[614] Literally, according to the Greek text: "Lazarus, here, forth!" That is: Come forth from the tomb, and come here.

proofs, this circumstance is an impressive mark of truthfulness. The apocryphal Gospels would not have recounted the event in this way.[615]

After his complete yet restrained narrative, St. John mentions two direct effects that were produced by the raising of Lazarus. The first was a most happy one: a large number of the Jews who were at that time visiting Martha and Mary and who witnessed the miracle, believed in Jesus and acknowledged Him as the Messias. One of the purposes which Christ intended and which He explicitly mentioned in His prayer when raising His friend Lazarus from the dead, was therefore partly realized.

But a very opposite effect was unfortunately also the consequence of the miracle. Some of the visitors, those who had murmured at Lazarus' tomb, upon returning to Jerusalem, went to the Pharisees and told them what had taken place. This move on their part was a plainly hostile one; it was a malicious denunciation, as subsequent events proved. The author of the Fourth Gospel, here as on nearly every page, is careful to note the double current of love and hate, of faith and unbelief, which the Savior's various acts put in motion.

At news of such an unheard-of miracle, which would add to the fame and power of Him whom they regarded as a dangerous foe, the chief priests, that is, the principal members of the Sadducean party, and the Pharisees—consequently the leaders of the two most influential classes of the Judaism of our Lord's time—experienced a veritable alarm. Although these two parties were usually opposed to each other and contended for the political and religious direction of the country, we see them once more joining hands to bring about the death of Jesus, to whom they were equally hostile. By their intrigues and representations, they had the Sanhedrin at once convoked in special session, to consider the measures that

[615] See Appendix III.

should be taken. According to a rather early tradition, the meeting was held in a country house belonging to the High Priest Caiphas, official president of the Sanhedrin; this house was located on a hill south of Jerusalem, beyond the valley of Hinnom,[616] and has since been called Mount of Evil Counsel.

There was a stormy debate. "What shall we do?" asked the chief instigators; "for this man doth many miracles. If we let Him alone so, all will believe in Him; and the Romans will come and take away our place[617] and nation." From their point of view, this fear was not at all chimerical. It was not a cry of hypocritical alarm which they here utter, that they may later justify their cruelty toward Jesus; they were expressing a real and serious anxiety. They knew Rome, and they knew their own people. Rome was very jealous of her rights over the provinces she had conquered; former uprisings, pitilessly suppressed, had given her a feeling of profound distrust of the Jews. Her wrath broke forth violently and irresistibly on the slightest provocation.[618] On the other hand, the mass of the Jewish people, full of preconceptions, thought of the Messias as a mighty liberator, who would first of all shake off the yoke of the Romans and then rule the whole world as king. The people were but waiting for his coming, to rally to his banner and march with him to victory and vengeance. The chief priests and members of the Sanhedrin knew this; the future justified their sinister forebodings only too exactly. It was the Jews' rebellion that led to the final destruction of their State and the ruin of their capital. Yet they had a most incorrect understanding of Jesus, the Messias according to the heart of God, whose kingdom was altogether heavenly, who aspired only to the conquest of souls. Under His peaceful sway, if men but rallied faithfully under

[616] Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible*, plates 14 and 15.
[617] That is, Jerusalem, the capital of the theocracy.
[618] Cf. Luke 13:1.

His scepter, the disastrous consequences dreaded by the chief priests and Pharisees would have been quite unfounded.[619] It is noteworthy that, notwithstanding their violent hatred, these cruel, wicked men had only one complaint against Christ. His numerous miracles, winning the affection of the multitudes, were the only crime He was guilty of. Is it not a remarkable fact that, in spite of their unfriendliness, they did not for a moment think of denying the reality of the Savior's miracles? This testimony is of no small weight.

Something must be done against Jesus, and that promptly. Caiphas, the High Priest, expressed the conclusion of this deliberation, which had been of a confused sort. He brought all suggestions into agreement by suggesting a summary and expeditious means of avoiding the danger. "You know nothing," he said by way of exordium, in the rudely contemptuous manner of the Sadducees.[620] He then set forth his infamous proposal: "Neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." It was the death of Christ that this unscrupulous pontiff thus put to a vote, employing an abominable fallacy and alleging reasons of state, which have served as a screen for so many crimes. It is likely that a formal vote was not taken at the time. But the proposal was adopted. Thus, from that day forth, the chief priests and the Pharisees sought to encompass Christ's death as soon as possible and by every means. They organized an unrelenting conspiracy against Him.

On the subject of Caiphas' horrible words, the Evangelist makes this striking remark: "This he spoke not of himself; but being the High Priest of that year,[621] he prophesied that

[619] Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean*, p. 236.

[620] Josephus, *Bell. Iud.*, II, viii, 14.

[621] Referring to that year made famous by the death of Christ. The pronoun is very emphatic.

Jesus should die for the nation,[622] and not only for the nation, but to gather together in one the children of God, that were dispersed." In former times, on important occasions in Israel's history, the Jewish high priests had enjoyed the privilege of uttering oracles, after consulting Yahweh.[623] God now revived this marvelous power for Caiphas, who, while supposing he was simply condemning Jesus to a cruel and undeserved death, had prophesied the salvation which that death was to procure, first for Israel, then for all mankind. He had spoken, therefore, not as a private individual, but under divine inspiration and as the supreme pontiff of the theocracy. The sheep of the Good Shepherd were scattered through the whole world; after His death and Resurrection, He would gather them, so as to form a single flock.

Before what He called His "hour," Christ did not expose Himself to danger without real necessity. Feeling no longer safe in the vicinity of Jerusalem, He retired with His Apostles to a place called Ephrem or Ephraim,[624] about which there is some uncertainty. According to the most likely opinion, it is the town called Ophrah in the Books of Josue and Judges,[625] and Ephrem in the writings of Josephus.[626] The Jewish historian locates it in the mountains of Judea, not far northeast of Bethel, at the spot which to-day bears the name of Tayibeh.[627] It is the northernmost point of the desert of Juda, in which Jesus could easily find refuge if His enemies undertook to disturb His repose. He spent a few peaceful days, or at most a few weeks, in that solitude.

The Pasch, the last one of His earthly life, was near at

[622] The Jewish nation, the theocratic race.

[623] Cf. Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:19; 1 Kings 28:6, etc.

[624] The latter reading, Ἐφραίμ, is to be preferred.

[625] Jos. 18:23; Judg. 6:11.

[626] *Bell. Iud.*, IV, ix, 9.

[627] Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible,* plates 10 and 13; Robinson, *Palästina und die angrenzenden Länder,* II, 333 ff.; Guérin, *Déscription de la Palestine: Judée,* III, 4–6.

hand, and already pilgrims were flocking to the Holy City from all sides. As the Evangelist notes, those in greatest haste were the Jews who had to undergo purification from some legal defilement before the festival. This required special ceremonies, which could be performed nowhere but in the Temple, and which in some cases took several days.[628] As at the feast of Dedication,[629] Jesus was the subject of everyone's thought and conversation. He was sought on all sides. As He was not yet seen anywhere, people began to ask from one group to another: "What think you? That He will not come to the festival day?" The interest He aroused was greater than ever, for it was known that the Sanhedrin, not satisfied with issuing an order for His arrest, had even declared that whoever knew of His place of retreat, was bound to report it. This was a clever step, because it tended to brand Jesus as a dangerous, nay, as a grievously guilty man. A crisis was now imminent.

III. Jesus Goes Up to Jerusalem to Consummate His Sacrifice; Some Incidents of the Journey; The Anointing at Bethania

When the moment came for Jesus to return to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, He left Ephrem, still accompanied by His Apostles. According to St. Mark's Gospel, which is especially dramatic at this point,[630] the Savior walked a short distance ahead of His followers. He knew that the journey would end on Calvary. But this thought increased His generous ardor. Resolutely He advanced, like a general leading his soldiers. Behind Him came the Twelve, but like a timid troop, instinctively sensing danger ahead and approaching it with hesitant step. From their Master's attitude they grasped that important events would soon take place, and

[628] Num. 6: 1–21; 2 Par. 30: 16–20; Acts 21: 24.
[629] John 7: 11.
[630] Mark 10: 32.

that they would perforce be involved in them. "They were astonished," says the Evangelist; "and following were afraid." Some time before,[631] Jesus had "steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem" and there meet His death.

The disciples' anxiety did not escape the Divine Master. He stopped suddenly, gathered them about Him, and for the third time in an official manner—not to mention occasional brief allusions—foretold the lot which awaited Him. The first of the three predictions took place immediately after St. Peter's confession;[632] the second, after the Transfiguration.[633] On the present occasion Jesus said: "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things shall be accomplished which were written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man." These introductory words, reported in the Third Gospel, show our Lord embracing in one glance the Old Testament prophecies regarding His Passion and death, and disposed to realize them fully. He then said: "The Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and to the Scribes and ancients, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles. And they shall mock Him, and scourge Him, and kill Him. And the third day He shall rise again." [634]

This passage from St. Mark's Gospel bears a close resemblance to the corresponding passages in the other Synoptics. Comparing this prophecy with the two preceding ones, we note at once that it is clearer and more explicit. This was in accordance with Christ's intention that the Apostles should not be taken unawares and be utterly disheartened when the sorrowful events should happen, which He describes with such impressive clearness. The tragedy that will end on Calvary is divided into six acts, briefly summed up by our Lord: the

[631] Luke 9:51.
[632] Matt. 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22.
[633] Matt. 17:21 f.; Mark 9:30 f.; Luke 9:44 f.
[634] Mark 10:33 f.; cf. Matt. 20:18 f.; Luke 18:32 f.

first betrayal (the author of which will be revealed only on Holy Thursday night) delivering Christ into the hands of the Sanhedrin; the death sentence by the Jewish tribunal; another betrayal that will deliver the Savior into the hands of the pagans; the Passion itself, the principal scenes of which are mentioned; the various insults heaped upon the august Victim; then His death, which only St. Matthew calls by its exact name, the crucifixion; lastly, the Resurrection, which closes the sorrowful list, like a bright ray of light, intended to instill hope in the hearts of the Apostles. And all this will happen very soon, at the time of the Pasch which was actually bringing Christ and His disciples to Jerusalem.

The two previous predictions had pained the Twelve because, all except the traitor, they had a great love for their Master. Yet those predictions were in such contrast with the Apostles' foolish Messianic hopes as to fail to penetrate deeply into their minds. The same was true this time, as St. Luke remarks: "They understood none of these things, and this word was hid from them, and they understood not the things that were said." Not wishing for a suffering Messias, one humbled even unto death, they transformed the idea of a kingdom inaugurated by Christ into a wholly earthly idea, and did not at all grasp this language, which remained an insoluble enigma to them. They were saddened by it, but they avoided thinking upon this desolating picture which, to their minds, could be nothing more than an exaggeration.

An incident which could hardly have been foreseen, at that very time showed how great was the misapprehension for which the Evangelist has just tacitly blamed the Twelve.[635] Salome, the mother of James the Greater and of John, one of those devout Galilean women who often followed our Lord on His missionary journeys and ministered to His needs,[636]

[635] Related by St. Matthew (20:20–28) and St. Mark (10:35–45).
[636] Luke 8:1–3. Cf. Matt. 27:55 f.; Mark 15:40 f.

came to Him, accompanied by her two sons, and prostrated herself before Him. With a false appearance of discretion, she said that she had something to ask Him. This clever little maneuver is well described by the sacred writers. But Jesus quickly defeated it. "What wilt thou?" he asked Salome. She replied: "Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom." [637] As is still true, the place of honor was on the right of the principal personage; the second place was at his left.[638] What Salome desired for her two sons was, therefore, the posts of the two chief ministers of our Lord, after He should finally establish His kingdom. Like them, she thought this would be in the very near future. This mother had allowed herself to be momentarily misled by the imperfect promptings of nature. But therein she was probably spokesman for James and John who, not daring to prefer their strange request themselves, had put their mother forward in the hope that she would be more favorably heard by the Savior.

This step of theirs could not have been more untimely, coming, as it did, immediately after the announcement of the Passion. But Christ had quite recently spoken of the twelve thrones on which the Apostles were some day to sit, and they were persuaded that the day would soon dawn. They understood that their Master's present journey to Jerusalem had a decisive importance and that undoubtedly He was going to become recognized as the Messias: the time was, therefore, urgent for those who had an ambition for the office of chief ministers. Jesus turned to the two brothers (disregarding the mother, who was simply speaking in their behalf), and with kindly words, but in a firm tone that emphasized the rebuke, said to them: "You know not what you ask." In fact, James

[637] St. Mark's Gospel has "in thy glory." The thought is the same.

[638] See 3 Kings 2:19; Ps. 109:1; Acts 7:55; Rom. 8:34; Josephus, *Ant.*, VI, xi, 9.

and John had acted like children who do not grasp the full import of what they do. "Can you," continued the Savior, "drink of the chalice that I drink of; or be baptized with the baptism wherewith I am baptized?" By these two figures He referred to the bitter cup of His sufferings and death, and the baptism of blood He would soon receive under the lash of the executioners and on the cross. Although in the Bible the cup is sometimes a symbol of joy,[639] it also stands for sadness and misfortune;[640] in this latter sense the Son of Man at Gethsemani implores His Father to remove it from His lips.[641] The second metaphor likewise appears in Scripture and in profane literature,[642] to indicate the deep waters of suffering in which one is in danger of being drowned. The two figures have the same sense.

To the Savior's question the sons of Zebedee answered: "We can." They were sincere in saying so, as their lives subsequently show. Although their love for Christ was still imperfect, it was earnest and generous. If ambition did have a share in their request, yet the desire to be placed close to the Master whom they loved, to some extent excused, or at least explained it. The Savior replied: "You shall indeed drink of the chalice that I drink of; and with the baptism wherewith I am baptized, you shall be baptized. But to sit on My right hand or on My left, is not Mine to give to you, but to them for whom it is prepared." Jesus thus referred the two brothers to the eternal decrees of His heavenly Father, which He would not allow Himself to alter in any respect. No doubt He has a right to bestow upon the elect the rewards they have merited;[643] but He uses that right only in a manner conformable to the divine will. As to the trial which James and

[639] Ps. 22:5; 115:13.
[640] Ps. 74:9; Is. 51:17, 22; Lament. 4:21; Ezech. 23:31.
[641] Matt. 26:39, 42.
[642] Job 22:11; Ps. 17:16; 41:8; 68:1–3, etc.
[643] See 2 Tim. 4:8; Apoc. 22:12.

John thought they could endure, in due time they endured it, for Jesus honored them by associating them with His cross.

This prediction was fulfilled to the letter. Among the Apostles, St. James the Greater was the first who had the glory of suffering death for Christ,[644] and St. John underwent every sort of suffering for the Christian cause, to the very close of his long life.[645] Although the beloved disciple was perhaps the only member of the Apostolic College who did not meet death at the executioner's hands,[646] yet he, too, merited the martyr's aureole. Having been arrested at Ephesus and brought to Rome by Domitian's order, he was cast into a cauldron of boiling oil.[647] Later he was exiled to the island of Patmos, as he himself says at the beginning of the Apocalypse.[648]

When Jesus had finished His rebuke, the ten other Apostles, who had been present at the whole scene, gave vent to the feelings of indignation which had been aroused in them by the conduct of the two brothers. They themselves were not less imperfect, since they had similar preconceptions about the Messias and His kingdom. But they thought their own rights injured by Salome's request, for they, too, were eager for the first places. Their jealousy must have shown itself in murmuring and bitter reproaches. They also had need of a lesson. Therefore Jesus called them all to Him and in a few eloquent words outlined for them a picture of true Christian greatness, which He contrasted with the false greatness of the world. He wished to cleanse their hearts of ambition and

[644] Acts 12:2.

[645] Fillion, *S. Jean l'Évangéliste, sa Vie et ses Écrits,* pp. 134–141.

[646] George Hamartolus, a Greek writer of the ninth century, relates that the Apostle was martyred by the Jews. But this story is without foundation. The early authors who speak of St. John's death never intimate that it was the result of violence.

[647] Tertullian, *De Praescript.,* 36; St. Jerome, *Adv. Jovinian.,* I, 26.

[648] Apoc. 1:9.

rivalry, those pagan vices which should have no place in His Church. He said to them:

"You know that they who seem to rule over the Gentiles, lord it over them; and their princes have power over them. But it is not so among you; but whosoever will be greater, shall be your minister. And whosoever will be first among you, shall be the servant of all. For the Son of Man also is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a redemption for many." [649]

As in His words to James and John, so here, there is nothing but kindliness. Jesus speaks to His disciples as an elder brother explaining to the younger and less experienced members of the family the line of conduct they should follow. This little instruction contains two principal thoughts: an unworthy example to be avoided, and a perfect example to be imitated. The evil example was that of the despots, great and small, who were then at the head of the Roman Empire, its provinces, and so-called allied kingdoms. Those to whom Christ entrusted the care of governing the faithful in His name, were to have nothing in common with that spirit of haughty domination; they were to become the servants of all. The example to be followed is that of the Savior, who, notwithstanding His high office and divine nature, humbled Himself to perform this lowly service, and even to give His life as a ransom for the salvation of many, namely, of all those who would consent to make the great redemption their own.

Jesus was then nearing Jericho, after Jerusalem the most flourishing city of Judea. It occupied a considerable part of the plain at the foot of the Quarantania hills, seven miles from the Jordan, about 800 feet below the level of the Mediter-

[649] Matt. 20:25–28; Mark 10:42–45.

ranean.[650] It was surrounded by the grim wilderness of Juda. But at Jericho itself, owing to abundant springs [651] and a good system of irrigation, there was an oasis of remarkable fertility, which Josephus describes enthusiastically.[652] Its agricultural products were as abundant as they were varied. Groves of palms, bananas, sycamores, and other trees on all sides joined with the refreshing coolness of the springs to offset the tropical heat of the region. Augustus made a gift of this city to King Herod, who enlarged and adorned it and there built the rich palace in which he had recently died. The ancient city, which Josue overcame, was situated farther north, near the well of Eliseus.[653] Of so great splendor and wealth there remains to-day only a wretched little hamlet, called Er Riha, made up of thatch-roofed mud-huts, and counting about five hundred inhabitants. The fine trees of former times have almost entirely disappeared; but efforts are being made to recultivate the soil and restore its fertility.

Our Lord's arrival at Jericho led to two interesting occurrences: one of them took place when He was entering the city,[654] the other, just as He was leaving it. When word of His approach reached the city, the whole population became astir, and the streets were soon filled with spectators. The chief of the publicans of that district,[655] a Jew named Zacheus, who had become wealthy in that lucrative post, had often heard Jesus spoken of, and had probably been told that He was a

650 Fillion, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible,* pl. 18.

651 See 4 Kings 2: 19–22.

652 *Bell. Iud.,* IV, viii, 2 f.

653 Some very interesting ruins of it have recently been brought to light.

654 It is related only by St. Luke, 19: 1–10.

655 The Greek text gives him the title of ἀρχιτελώνης (Vulg., *princeps publicanorum*), a term found nowhere else; it is difficult to determine its exact meaning. Jericho was a center of considerable trade in balm and other agricultural products. And it was a no less important point for goods in transit from the east and north to Jerusalem and the neighboring regions. A large force of publicans must have been employed there. See Josephus, *Ant.,* XIV, iv, 1; XV, iv, 2; Justin, *Hist.,* XXXVI, 3; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.,* XII, 54.

friend of the publicans. Therefore he was most eager for a close view of so famous a person. He quickly made his way along the route where the Savior was passing. But the street was already so full of people that Zacheus, who was of small stature, realized that the dense crowd would prevent his seeing Jesus. Moreover, his desire was not prompted by commonplace curiosity; it showed a beginning of faith in Christ. The rest of the narrative is brief and dramatic. The obstacles which Zacheus encountered did but increase his zeal. Seeing a sycamore[656] not far off, at a spot where Jesus would pass, Zacheus ran to it and quickly succeeded in installing himself on one of the lower branches, which on the sycamore ordinarily grow rather close to the ground and spread out on all sides.[657]

When the Savior came opposite the tree, He raised His eyes—with a look that reminds us of the look He turned upon Nathanael in the early days of His ministry [658]—and said to the chief of the publicans: "Zacheus, make haste and come down; for this day I must abide in thy house." This is the only time that our Lord seems to have invited Himself to the hospitality of anyone's house, and He did so in a simple, royal manner. Furthermore, there is every reason to suppose that He stayed at Zacheus' house only a short time, for a few hours at most. We may easily imagine the eagerness with which the publican descended from the tree, and the distinguished welcome he extended to his guest. But many of the people were scandalized that Christ should go to the home

[656] This tree grows only in the warmer parts of Palestine, especially in the Jordan valley. It is not related to the sycamore of Europe. As indicated by its Greek name, it is related both to the fig tree and to the mulberry: to the former by its fruit, to the latter by its leaves.

[657] Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible*, p. 398; Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, pp. 23–25; Fillion, *Atlas d'Histoire Naturelle de la Bible*, pl. 17, fig. 346.

[658] John 1:47 f.

of a man generally regarded as a public sinner; and they murmured their displeasure.

Zacheus, however, standing respectfully[659] before his illustrious guest, said to Him (the rest of the scene took place seemingly in his house): "Behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man of any thing, I restore him fourfold." By these words he expressed a double resolution, firmly decided upon in his mind.[660] In memory of the honor shown him by the Savior, and as a sign of his now complete and solid faith in Christ as the promised Messias, he promises to give half of his fortune to the poor; then he declares that if he should be aware of having committed any injustice—which would almost inevitably happen in the exercise of his duties—he would make fourfold compensation for the injury thus caused his neighbor. Restitution to this extent was not required by the Jewish law unless a stolen object had been alienated by the thief or had perished while in his possession.[661] Ordinarily, double restitution only was required,[662] and, if made spontaneously, it sufficed to add one-fifth of the value of the article.

Such dispositions, openly expressed, were undeniable marks of a sincere conversion. Jesus publicly felicitated Zacheus and with a delightful mixture of seriousness and kindliness, said: "This day is salvation come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Our Lord thus indicated two reasons fully justifying His conduct in the present case. The first was the right of Zacheus himself, who, upon his sincere conversion, became a true Israelite, worthy of his ancestor Abraham. The second reason was of a loftier nature: it recalled the great office and sublime motto of Christ, who had

[659] The Greek *σταθείς* indicates a solemn and dignified posture.

[660] Instead of the future, the present tense is used: "I give . . . I restore."

[661] Ex. 22: 1.

[662] Ex. 22: 4–9.

come expressly to seek the stray sheep and to lead them back to the fold.

It was probably while in Zacheus' house and in the presence of the people assembled there, that Christ delivered the parable of the pounds.[663] A few words, by way of introduction, show us why the Divine Master uttered it at that particular time; its general theme refers to His second coming. "He was nigh to Jerusalem," in fact only seven or eight hours' journey from the Holy City,[664] and His followers, including the intimate circle of the Apostles, "thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately be manifested." They persisted in thinking that Christ was going up to Jerusalem to be proclaimed Messias-King and to establish His kingdom, surrounded by all the human glories fancifully imagined by the Jews. It was important to calm this dangerous and excited state of mind, by showing, through the details of this poetic composition, that a considerable time would elapse before Christ's return for that final establishment;[665] and also by showing that His disciples ought to use that long interval in assiduous labor, if they wish to be rewarded at His last coming; and by showing that His enemies, by opposing His enthronement in the sense willed by God, would not escape just punishment. The parable begins thus:

"A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And calling his ten servants, he gave them ten pounds, and said to them: Trade till I come. But his citizens hated him; and they sent an embassage after him, saying: We will not have this man to reign over us."

[663] This parable is recorded only in St. Luke's Gospel, 19: 11–28.

[664] The distance between Jericho and Jerusalem is reckoned at 17 miles; according to Josephus it is 150 stadia.

[665] This remark has a special importance at this point, because it refutes the Rationalist objection that Christ Himself was expecting the end of the world to come very soon, and the Messianic kingdom to be established at once in a glorious and final form.

This nobleman,[666] who goes afar off to be invested with the kingdom which is rightly his,[667] represents Jesus, who was on the point of returning to heaven, and who would come back only after the lapse of ages, the duration of which He has not revealed. The nobleman, while awaiting the time of his return, tests the ability and faithfulness of several of his servants, whom he intends later to associate with his government as ministers of state. To each of them he entrusts a sum of money, which they are to increase in his absence. The *mina* [668] (called "pound" in the Douay Version) was not a form of currency. It had been a weight—this is the sense of the Jewish word "maneh"—and then became a money of account, like the talent.[669] In this passage the reference is probably to the Attic *mina,* which amounted to a hundred drachmas and was worth about eighteen dollars. The sum confided to each servant was therefore only $180: the total sum being $1600.

The detail regarding the nobleman's enemies and the embassy which they sent to the suzerain on whom the investiture depended, is of particular interest, for it was plainly suggested to our Lord by events that took place in Palestine shortly after His birth. Upon the death of Herod the Great, his son Archelaus went to Rome to obtain from the emperor a confirmation of the royal title, which his father had bequeathed to him.[670] The Jews, hating him on account of the

[666] Εὐγενής (Vulg., *nobilis*), "well-born."

[667] This detail is taken from the customs of the time. Many of the petty rulers, in Palestine and the neighboring country (Judea, Chalcis, Abila, Damascus, etc.), had to go to Rome to receive investiture from the senate and the emperor. The author of the First Book of Machabees (8: 13) makes a significant remark on this subject.

[668] In Greek, μνᾶ (Vulg., *mna*): this noun came from the Hebrew through the Phenician.

[669] See Volume II, pp. 591 f.

[670] Volume I, pp. 131 f. Cf. Josephus, *Ant.,* XVII, ix, 13; xi, 4; *Bell. Iud.,* XI, ii, 1.

cruelty which he showed at the very outset of his rule, sent a delegation of fifty prominent men to Rome to protest to Augustus and to implore him to break the will. By their unbelief the Savior's countrymen likewise, so far as they were able, opposed His reigning over them. A few days later, in fact, repudiating the Messias and denying their whole religious history, they cry out: "We have no king but Caesar!" [671]

The second part of the parable describes what took place after the return of the nobleman, who had become king and was invested with full authority, as Jesus will be when He returns at the end of time, in His royal glory and almighty power:

"And it came to pass that he returned, having received the kingdom; and he commanded his servants to be called, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. And the first came, saying: Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said to him: Well done, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in a little, thou shalt have power over ten cities. And the second came, saying: Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said to him: Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying: Lord, behold here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin; for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up what thou didst not lay down, and thou reapest that which thou didst not sow. He saith to him: Out of thy own mouth I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up what I laid not down, and reaping that which I did not sow. And why then didst thou not give my money into the bank, that at my coming, I might have exacted it with usury? And he said to them that stood by: Take the pound away from him, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. And they said to him: Lord, he hath ten pounds. But I say to you, that to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall abound; and from him that hath not, even that which he hath, shall be taken from him. But as for those my enemies, who would not

[671] John 19: 15.

have me reign over them, bring them hither, and kill them before me."

One of the first acts of the new ruler is naturally to call for an accounting on the part of the servants to whom he entrusted the minas. The parable, by way of example, mentions three of them. Those who increased the sum committed to them, are felicitated and rewarded to a greater or less degree according to the zeal they showed in their master's service. The wicked servant, who arrogantly tries to excuse himself, and who even dares to accuse the nobleman of being a severe master and an unjust accuser,[672] is silenced by a conclusive *argumentum ad hominem*. Why had he not lent the money to bankers? Without any labor on his part, it would have been returned with valuable interest.

After punishing or rewarding his ten servants according to their conduct, the king issues a drastic decree against those who had made hostile opposition to him at the time of his departure. The sentence was final and was carried out at once, according to the frequent practice of Oriental countries. The parable closes abruptly after these terrible words. It is a manifest prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Jewish State, as a punishment for the obstinate unbelief of the greater part of the nation.

After giving this important lesson to His friends and foes, Jesus departed from Zacheus' house and left Jericho, for the last of His journeys. Before relating a brilliant miracle which He performed at that time, we must briefly examine two little exegetical problems arising from apparent contradictions between the three Evangelists by whom it is narrated.[673]

[672] The proverbial expressions, "to take up what one did not lay down, to reap what one did not sow," mean here to accumulate wealth without personal work, at the expense of poor people's labor.

[673] Matt. 20:29–34; Mark 10:46–52; Luke 18:35–43. St. Mark's account is the most lifelike and complete. St. Luke also has a few special features. But

The first problem concerns the exact moment when the miracle was performed. According to SS. Matthew and Mark, it was upon Jesus' leaving Jericho; according to St. Luke, it was upon His approach to that city. In which direction are we to find historical exactness? In any event, this detail is altogether secondary and nowise affects the substance of the account. Jesus performed a great miracle of healing near one of the gates of Jericho: this is the essential fact, upon which the three Evangelists agree. Very probably the miraculous cure occurred at the hour of His departure, as indicated by St. Matthew, who was an eyewitness, and by St. Mark, who was, so to speak, an auricular witness. It is likely that St. Luke purposely anticipated, because he had to relate afterwards the episode about Zacheus, to which he attached greater importance. Attempts have been made to reconcile the two narratives on this first point, by recalling that at that time there were two different cities by name of Jericho, situated a little distance from each other, the ancient Chanaanean city more to the north, and the new city, enlarged and beautified by Herod the Great and Archelaus, so that the miracle might have taken place between the two towns, while Jesus was leaving one to enter the other.[674] But this solution seems to us inadequate.

The second problem concerns the number of the blind men who were cured by our Lord. St. Matthew mentions two; the other Synoptics mention only one—St. Mark even gives his name: Bartimeus. Several early and modern commentators, connecting this difficulty with the preceding one, solve them together by saying that Jesus restored sight to three blind men at Jericho: to two of them when He entered the city and

at many points there will be found a literal resemblance between the three narratives.

[674] See Fouard, *The Christ the Son of God,* II, 152.

to a third as He was leaving.[675] This explanation, however, embodies a manifest exaggeration. The reconciliation of the two accounts is fairly simple. There were in reality two blind men, as St. Matthew says. As in the case of the demoniacs of Gergesa,[676] so here St. Mark and St. Luke mention only the blind man who was better known. In so doing they no more contradict the First Gospel than it contradicts them. This is the solution most commonly held by Christian exegetes. The Evangelists are not compiling official statistics;[677] none of them pretended to give a complete list of the sick people cured by Christ.

We have already described the desolate region which our Lord traversed in going from Jericho to Jerusalem. On this occasion He crossed this district surrounded by an enthusiastic multitude, in whose midst He advanced like a valiant captain, whom no danger terrifies. That multitude, forming a sort of triumphal escort for Him, was made up largely of pilgrims going up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Pasch. In all likelihood, the day was a Friday, exactly a week before the Savior's Passion and death.

As Jesus was leaving Jericho, two blind men were seated at the side of the road leading to Jerusalem. They were a short distance outside the city gate and were begging alms of those passing by. Hearing an unusual noise, they asked the reason. When they were told that "Jesus of Nazareth," accompanied by a large crowd, was passing by, they began to cry out: "Son of David, have mercy on us!" Their giving our Lord this title plainly showed that they acknowledged Him to be the Messias. In fact, such was then the most popu-

[675] St. Augustine maintains this view in his treatise *De Consensu Evangelist.*, II, 65.

[676] Volume II, p. 435, note 626.

[677] Laidlaw, *The Miracles of Our Lord*, 4th ed., p. 324.

lar title of the Messias.[678] The change which the two blind men made in the appellation used by the crowd is therefore significant. These afflicted men had heard of other blind persons whose sight had been restored by Christ, and they counted on His all-powerful compassion to receive the same favor from Him. But those at the head of the procession roughly ordered them to be silent, considering them as common beggars and mistakenly fearing that Jesus would be annoyed by their loud cries, which disturbed the harmony of this almost triumphal march. Far from being intimidated by these rebukes, the two beggars cried out still more loudly, in their monotonous and pitiful voices: "O Lord, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us!" This opportunity to recover their sight was too precious that they should not make every effort to profit by it.

On former occasions Jesus scarcely ever failed to protest in such cases and to impose silence upon those who thus publicly proclaimed His Messiaship.[679] In the present instance, however, He permits it and accepts the homage paid Him. Was He not going to Jerusalem with the clearly marked intention of making His solemn entry there as Messias? Hence, when He heard these cries of distress, He stopped and commanded that the two afflicted men be brought to Him. The crowd, seeing that He was so interested in the blind men, now became gentle; instead of rebukes, they spoke to the beggars with kindly words: "Be of better comfort; arise, He calleth you." They had no need to repeat the words. St. Mark, with his customary exactness, remarks that Bartimeus, the better known of the two, in order to go more quickly, cast aside the piece of cloth that served as a cloak, "leaped up," and ran to meet Jesus in joyful haste.

To further arouse their faith, our Lord asked them: "What

[678] Cf. Matt. 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 21:9, 15, etc. See Volume I, p. 313.
[679] Cf. Matt. 8:4; 9:30; Mark 1:25; 3:12; 5:43; 7:36, etc.

will ye that I do to you?" From the depth of their heart, they answered: "Rabboni [Master],[680] that we may see." Moved with compassion,[681] the Savior touched their eyes, saying: "Go, your faith hath made you whole." Their sight was at once restored. With what love they must have turned their first gaze upon Jesus! The better to testify their gratitude they joined the multitude going with Him to the Holy City; they blessed God, and the whole crowd united with them in their act of thanksgiving.

When Jesus reached Bethania, which is on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem, He stopped and went to the home of His friends, Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. From several passages in the first two Gospels[682] it follows that, during this last week of His life, He usually spent most of the daytime in the Temple, returning at evening to Bethania or the Mount of Olives to pass the night there.

In this quiet village, probably on the day after the Savior's arrival, there took place the remarkable episode which St. John relates in concert with St. Matthew and St. Mark.[683] According to the chronological place to which the first two Synoptics seem to assign this incident, one might be tempted to defer its date to Tuesday evening of Holy Week, two days before the Pasch. But a very precise note at the beginning of St. John's account assigns to the events their true chronological order. He says: "Jesus therefore six days before the Pasch came to Bethania, where Lazarus had been dead, whom Jesus raised to life." The Paschal solemnities began on the evening of the 14th Nisan. Going back six days, we obtain the 8th Nisan.

[680] Cf. John 20:16, where we find this Hebrew title on the lips of Mary Magdalen. It is an augmentative of *Rabbi*.

[681] Σπλαγχνισθείς (Vulg., *misertus*). This detail is from St. Matthew; the *Rabboni* is from St. Mark.

[682] Matt. 21:17; Mark 11:11, 19, 27.

[683] Matt. 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; John 12:1–11. The account of this anointing is omitted by St. Luke, who already narrated a similar incident (Luke 7:36–50).

It is true that, in spite of its apparent clearness, St. John's indication offers a real difficulty, for we do not know whether he includes in his reckoning the day of arrival at Bethania and the first day of the festival. Nevertheless, according to calculations that we shall explain later on, we shall see that, since Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem took place on a Sunday and since it was, as St. John says,[684] the day after the dinner and the anointing at Bethania, these last two details must have occurred on Saturday.[685] As traveling was forbidden on the Sabbath, our Lord must have reached Bethania in the evening of the preceding Friday. From Friday to Thursday evening (14th Nisan) is exactly six days. SS. Matthew and Mark, therefore, purposely postponed the mention of the dinner and the anointing, that they might connect it with Judas' treason, related by them immediately afterwards, for which the pious prodigality of Mary (Lazarus' sister) served as the determining motive. In fact, the traitor, exasperated by an act which in his avarice he looked upon as an extravagance, and by the very mild rebuke given by His Master, went immediately after dinner to confer with the members of the Sanhedrin and made his infamous proposal to them.

On that Sabbath our Lord was invited with His Apostles to a formal dinner at the house of a certain Simon, who was called "the Leper," about whom we have no positive information. With great likelihood it has been conjectured that Simon had been cured of his leprosy by Jesus, whose devoted disciple he became. But there is no serious reason for regarding him as the father of Lazarus and his sisters, or as the husband of Martha. He was bound to Lazarus, Martha, and Mary by ties of close friendship. This is why, after our Lord, Lazarus was the principal guest and why the ever active

[684] John 12 : 12.

[685] It was usual for the Jews to have a rather pretentious meal on the Sabbath.

Martha served at table and acted as mistress of the house.

Mary again manifests her loving nature and her devotion to the Divine Master. During the dinner, she passed behind the couches on which the guests reclined,[686] carrying one of those alabaster flasks, with long, slender neck, in which the ancients kept precious perfumes.[687] This vase contained a pound of genuine oil of spikenard, as St. Mark expressly remarks.[688] The word "spikenard" is taken from the Sanskrit, the language of its native country,[689] eastern India. It is a small plant of the family of *Valerianae,*[690] the root, leaves, and stem of which furnish a liquid perfume which was highly esteemed by the ancients.[691]

Coming to Jesus, Mary broke the fragile neck of her alabaster vase and poured the contents partly upon the beloved Master's head and partly on His feet. She then dried His sacred feet with her hair, as the sinful woman did on a former occasion.[692] The whole house, says St. John, who witnessed this touching scene, was filled with the exquisite fragrance of the perfume.

This noble and generous act should have won nothing but praise. Yet it was severely criticized by some of the Savior's disciples, who saw therein a useless waste and exchanged

[686] See Volume II, p. 363.

[687] Herodotus, III, 20; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.,* XIII, 2: *"Unguenta optima servantur in alabastris."*

[688] The word πιστικῆς has received various interpretations: drinkable nard (the ancients sometimes mixed perfumes in their drinks); spikenard, made with the spike, or ear, of the plant from which the nard was extracted (hence the word *spicati* of the Vulgate); very probably, genuine, unadulterated nard. This last meaning is confirmed by a remark of Pliny (*Hist. Nat.,* XIII, 12), that fraud was practiced on a large scale in the case of nard, because of its high price.

[689] Hebrew *nerd;* Greek, ναρδός; Latin, *nardus.*

[690] Fillion, *Atlas d'Histoire Naturelle de la Bible,* p. 24 and pl. 24, fig. 9; pl. 25, fig. 1; Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible,* p. 485.

[691] The Hebrews had long been acquainted with it. Cf. Cant. 1:12; 4:13 f. The Romans were very fond of it.

[692] Luke 7:38. Why these anointings should be considered two different events, see Volume II, pp. 675 ff.

words of censure among themselves.[693] Judas Iscariot, who then filled the sad office of instigator, made bold to say: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" Three hundred *denarii* ("pence" in the Douay Version) was equal to about fifty dollars of our money; for that period it was a considerable sum, almost the wage of a laborer for a whole year.[694] This detail also is in harmony with what we know from other sources as to the value which the ancients attached to their choice perfumes. Pliny [695] mentions that four hundred *denarii* used to be paid for one pound. Judas knew this, as we may infer from a remark inserted by St. John, which reveals the evil character of the traitor's words: "Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and having the purse, carried the things that were put therein." Judas shamefully abused the confidence which Jesus placed in him by making him the treasurer of the Apostolic College. He was a common thief. This explains all. How could a thief, with his low, sordid spirit, who regarded Mary's royal prodigality as a wrong done to himself, appreciate the generous deeds of love? What a striking contrast between Judas' purse and Mary's alabaster vase, between the three hundred *denarii,* the value of the perfume, and the thirty *denarii* for which Judas sold his Master!

Jesus heard the murmuring and took up Mary's defense. He calmly but firmly protested against that miserable, narrow view, which had prevented some of His Apostles from comprehending that outside of the daily duties of charity there are exceptional circumstances when piety seeks to manifest itself freely and generously. "Let her alone," He said; "why do you molest her? She hath wrought a good work upon

693 The Greek πρὸς ἑαυτούς has this meaning. The Vulgate *intra semetipsos* does not translate it exactly.

694 Matt. 20:2. Cf. Mark 6:37, where we are told that two hundred *denarii* would buy enough bread to furnish a meal for several thousand men.

695 *Loc. cit.*

Me. For the poor you have always with you; and whensoever you will, you may do them good; but Me you have not always. She hath done what she could; she is come beforehand to anoint My body for the burial." The Savior unreservedly praises Mary's noble conduct, and at the same time reveals its remarkable symbolism. To the poor He leaves their rights, which He always recognized; but His own rights are no less real, especially under the circumstances of that particular time. His friends will have time to show their active sympathy for the poor; very little time remains for them to honor Him in person and to testify their affection for Him. Why should they look with displeasure upon the delicate homage just paid to Him? [696]

But Mary's act was more than one of affectionate homage. Without her being aware of it, under the influence of a divine inspiration, the pious friend of Jesus had by anticipation rendered funeral honors to Him. As we shall see exemplified on the occasion of Christ's burial, in the East rich families anoint the bodies of their deceased relatives with perfumed oils and wrap them in linens that have been impregnated with aromatic substances.[697]

To His words of praise Jesus added a reward, the effect of which still endures and will endure to the end of time: "Amen I say to you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done, shall be told for a memorial of her." These words contain a double prophecy: one general, declaring that the gospel of Christ will be preached throughout the world; the other specific and personal, promising Mary a glory which her humility was far from expecting—the glory of seeing her name forever as-

[696] The Greek equivalent of the words *bonum opus* in the Vulgate is not, as in many other passages of the New Testament, ἔργον ἀγαθόν, but καλὸν ἔργον; literally, "a beautiful work," beautiful from the moral point of view.

[697] Mark 16:1; John 19:39; Lucian, *De Luctu*, XI.

sociated with that of the Savior in the preaching of the gospel. Thus Lazarus' sister, in paying public homage to Him from whom she and hers had received so many blessings, unwittingly raised an eternal monument to herself.

PART V

The Suffering Life of Our Lord

The anointing at Bethania, which, according to our Lord's own interpretation, was an anticipated embalming of His sacred body, and on the next day the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, which raised His enemies' malice to the highest pitch, may be considered as the prologue of His Passion. Those two incidents open a new period of His life, a period lasting only a few days, but fraught with the gravest consequences for Christ and for mankind: for Christ, because it ended in His apparent defeat and death on the cross; for mankind, because it witnessed the consummation of the work of Redemption.

The Evangelists understood the capital importance of these last days of the Redeemer's earthly life. They now follow their Divine Hero step by step, we might say hour by hour, omitting scarcely a single detail of His acts, and gathering His words with religious care. Nowhere else in their accounts is a more precious accumulation of deeds and discourses to be found than during those blessed days. The sacred writers were aware that here was the central and most salient point of the world's history. Under their guidance, we can with redoubled faith and love accompany the Good Shepherd, who, as He Himself announced, is about to give His life for the salvation of His sheep. During His life Jesus won thousands of souls by His preaching and miracles and holiness; but never did His eloquence, His brilliant deeds, His works of power, and His example produce such happy results as did His suffering and ignominious death. Throughout His life He

appears divinely great; but, with all due respect we may say that He never appeared more so than during this last week. All that was ineffably beautiful and perfect in Him, now manifests itself to us in a most wonderful manner.

This impressive period has quite rightly been called Holy Week, for it embraces exactly seven days, the first day corresponding to our Sunday, the seventh to our Saturday. In another place we shall briefly consider the difficult question of the chronology of the Passion. Here it suffices to enumerate the succession of events, indicating their most probable date, according to the Gospels and the view of most exegetes.

On Sunday the Savior triumphantly entered Jerusalem. On Monday He for the second time drove the sellers out of the Temple. Tuesday was "the day of the great conflict." Beneath the Temple porticoes we shall witness another of Christ's brilliant triumphs. Attacked successively by the various groups of His bitterest foes, He withstands them victoriously and reduces all of them to a humiliating silence; then, in the presence of the people, He utters His crushing denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees. The same day, on the summit of the Mount of Olives, He makes important revelations to the inner circle of the Apostles about the destruction of Jerusalem and His second coming at the end of the world. It was also on Tuesday that the adversaries of Christ took steps to hasten the hour of His death: the Sanhedrin met at the house of the High Priest, Caiphas, and discussed this question; the traitor Judas came to the chief priests and shamelessly offered to deliver his Master into their hands at the first favorable opportunity. The sacred writers tell us nothing about what happened on Wednesday of Holy Week; probably the Savior spent that day at Bethania, in the circle of His friends and Apostles. In the evening of Holy Thursday He celebrated the Paschal supper with the Twelve, and instituted the Holy Eucharist. Then, after pouring out His

heart into the hearts of His Apostles and imparting His last counsels to them, He came with them to the solitude of Gethsemani, where His cruel agony and His arrest took place. Good Friday is celebrated for the twofold trial and condemnation of the Savior amidst countless insults, and for His Passion, death, and burial. On Holy Saturday His sacred body remained motionless in the tomb, awaiting His glorious resurrection, while His soul was comforting the just in limbo.

CHAPTER I

The Victorious Christ

The Gospels, particularly St. John's, clearly show that "the hour" which our Lord constantly had in mind ever since His Incarnation, the hour of the bloody sacrifice by which He was to save mankind, that hour which He often told His intimate followers had not yet come, was now imminent. After plainly claiming the title of Messias by word and deed throughout the whole course of His public life, and after having this title given Him in secret by His Apostles at the time of Peter's confession, was He going to disappear from this world—and, to outward seeming, disappear vanquished—without at least once publicly and officially accepting this title which was the direct purpose of His human existence? That was not possible, and His earthly life would have been incomplete without a sort of glorious apotheosis, by which His Messianic kingdom would be manifested.

True, for a long time He had half concealed His high dignity, for fear that a too complete and premature revelation, made before the multitude or before His enemies, would raise obstacles to the work of His ministry. It is also true that one day, almost by the use of violence, He refused to be proclaimed Messias-King by an enthusiastic multitude.[698] But that was owing to the false ideas which most of His countrymen, including His closest followers, entertained about the Messias. Now, on the eve of his death, this difficulty no longer counted. His disciples, already so numerous, and the Jewish people as a whole, had a right to know whether, once for all, He al-

[698] John 6: 14 f.

lowed to be proclaimed on the house-tops—to use one of His favorite expressions—what thus far He had permitted to be whispered only in secret.

In the crowds that followed Him, many were undecided. A brilliant manifestation was needed to overcome their hesitation and to consolidate the faith of those who believed in Him. This is why we shall presently see Him enter the theocratic capital, no longer as it were in secret [699] so as not uselessly to expose Himself to the hatred of His enemies, but as a veritable victor, and this despite decrees recently issued against Him by the religious leaders of Judaism. This glorious manifestation was in perfect harmony with our Lord's consciousness of being the Messias, with the Old Testament prophecies, and with His disciples' earnest desires and reasonable expectance. And this ovation will be shortly followed by another triumph, that of Christ's irresistible authority in driving vulgar profaners from the Temple, and that of the unanswerable logic with which He reduces His enemies to silence.

Solemn Entry into Jerusalem

The four Evangelists [700] unite in the very complete and dramatic narrative of this exceptionally important episode. Each of them records some special details. Their combined accounts form a splendid picture.

The crowd that pressed about Jesus at Jericho and accompanied Him as far as Bethania, was not mistaken when it supposed [701] that the kingdom of the Messias was to be presently manifested. But, in the divine plan, this was to be only a local, temporary investiture, which directly concerned the Jewish people alone. We must wait until the end of the present

[699] John 7: 10.
[700] Matt. 21: 1–11; Mark 11: 1–11; Luke 19: 29–44; John 12: 12–19.
[701] Luke 19: 11.

world, to see the universal reign of the Lord Christ shine forth in all its splendor. This fact does not prevent the Messias' entry into His capital from being "the finest and most brilliant that ever was, because it shows us a man, who seemed to be the last of all men in esteem and power, suddenly receiving from the whole people, in the royal city and in the Temple, greater honors than the mightiest kings had ever received." [702]

The Savior's triumph, although most brilliant, remained humble and modest, like the rest of His life. Both ancient and modern interpreters of the Gospels have remarked the surprising mixture of glory and humility which impresses us in this great event. We must note especially its exclusively religious character. Among those who gave Jesus this mark of faith, there were probably some who did not altogether exclude the political preconceptions with which their Messianic ideal was imbued. From this point of view, however, nothing came to disturb the beauty of the triumphal entry. Everything took place religiously, in full agreement with the portrait which the ancient prophets had drawn of the Messias' royal character. And Jesus Himself, while allowing the crowds to give expression to their feelings of faith and love, and while lending Himself to their enthusiastic acclaim, showed that He wished to be, as He later tells Pilate,[703] a Messias whose kingdom is not of this world.

As we learn from a chronological note in St. John's Gospel,[704] it was the day after the dinner given at Bethania in honor of Jesus, five days before the Pasch—a Sunday, according to a very early ecclesiastical and liturgical tradition—that the Savior made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. None of the Evangelists directly indicates the exact hour

[702] Bossuet, *Méditations sur l'Évangile,* Last week, first day.
[703] John 18:36.
[704] John 12:12.

when the ovation began. But as St. Mark says that it was late when it ended, it must have taken place in the afternoon. It probably lasted for several hours.

The Savior left Bethania, which was situated on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives.[705] He was escorted by His Apostles, His friends, numerous disciples, and a large crowd that had joined Him in the course of the day. Thus accompanied, He ascended the slope separating el Azarieh from Bethphage, a small village standing on the same side of the famous hill, but nearer the top. The Mount of Olives is rarely mentioned in the Old Testament;[706] but in the Gospels it is closely associated with the last days of our Lord's life. The first part of Christ's triumphal procession is directly connected with it, for on its summit and its western slope spread out the procession conducting Jesus from Bethphage to the Temple.

The name of the hill, which has not changed since the time of David and Zacharias,[707] evidently comes from the large number of olive trees that have always flourished there. It must formerly have been a veritable nook of verdure. But long since a great part of it was denuded, although, especially at its foot, it bears not only olive trees, but also pomegranates, fig trees, almond trees, apricot trees, and carob trees. There was also an abundance of palm trees. At its base and on its western slope, Jewish tombs have accumulated for centuries

[705] For the geographical details, see Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible,* plates 14, 15, 16.

[706] It is mentioned in 2 Kings 15:30, in connection with Absalom's revolt, which forced David to leave Jerusalem hastily; in 3 Kings 11:7 and 4 Kings 23:13, with regard to the sacrilegious conduct of Solomon, who had there constructed temples in honor of the pagan divinities worshipped by his wives. The prophet Zacharias (14:4) mentions it as the place whence the Lord will come to the help of the faithful part of His people, to succor them against powerful enemies.

[707] The Mohammedans and Christian Arabs call it *Djebel ez-Zeitun,* which means "mount of olives." It is also called *Djebel et-Tour* ("the mountain"), that is, the mountain *par excellence* in the environs of Jerusalem.

past; the children of Israel desire to be buried there in order to be first to share in the resurrection of the dead, which, at the time of the last judgment, will take place in the valley of Josaphat,[708] which they identify with that of the Cedron. The upper part of the hill is strewn with Christian monuments of widely different epochs.[709]

North of Jerusalem, near the village of Chafat, the Mount of Olives is connected with the central ridge of the Judean mountain range. It rises up directly east of the Holy City, being separated from it only by the valley of the Cedron, as by a gigantic ditch. From all the roofs of the city may be distinctly seen this little chain of hills, which is not without a certain delicate beauty.[710] "Three principal summits may be distinguished, in the shape of hillocks separated by slight depressions. The northernmost is also the highest, having an altitude of 2695 feet above the Mediterranean; the middle one is 2665 feet high, and the summit, opposite Jerusalem, is 2659; feet high (about 3900 feet above the Dead Sea)." [711]

To-day, as almost certainly in our Lord's time, there is a choice of three roads in going from Jerusalem to Bethania. The one most used by those traveling on foot is the northern, which starts out from St. Stephen's Gate and goes up the hill directly to the summit, whence it descends to Bethania on the other side. It is too steep for a horseman. The second route,

[708] Joel 3: 12.

[709] See Vincent and Abel, *Jérusalem, Recherches de Topographie, d'Archéologie et d'Histoire,* II, 301–419.

[710] It is one of the first objects that strikes the eye of a person stepping out of the Jerusalem railroad station.

[711] L. Heidet, in Vigouroux' *Dictionnaire de la Bible,* Vol. IV, col. 1780. The same author adds (*ibid.*): "The mountain mass is formed of strata of white limestone, more or less compact, upon which are here and there strata of later formation, especially of quartz. . . . Two small hills join the mountain and support it at the base like buttresses: to the southeast, the *Djebel Baten el Hoana* . . . with the village of *Siluan* on its western slope; to the southwest, the *Djebel el-Azarieh,* so named because the town of Lazarus (Bethania) is located at its foot."

which leaves the former road beyond the garden of Gethsemani, is even steeper. It passes close to the place called "Dominus flevit," where, tradition says, Jesus wept over Jerusalem; thence it turns toward the tower and the institution of the Russians. It is universally admitted that neither of these two roads would have been suited for a triumphal procession. There remains the third, which must have corresponded nearly to the present road, in recent years made suitable for travel by carriage and automobile; it goes from Jericho to Jerusalem by way of Bethania. Upon leaving Bethania, it follows the eastern flank of the Mount of Olives, taking a southwesterly direction; it then turns sharply to the northwest, leaving the Mount of Scandal on the left. Caravans could spread out comfortably along this route.

We have seen the advance of the procession that formed at Bethania to accompany the Savior to Jerusalem. According to the three Synoptics,[712] it soon reached another village, perhaps a simple hamlet,[713] called Bethphage (that is, "house of green figs"), the site of which cannot be ascertained with complete certitude. Neither the Old Testament nor Josephus makes mention of it. The Talmud frequently refers to it, but without any precise indication of its location.[714] Early Christian documents do likewise. But it clearly follows from the Gospel texts that Bethphage was close to Bethania and to the top of the Mount of Olives, and hence must have been located between those two places. In 1877 there was discovered the site which had been assigned to it in the Middle Ages; it is north of Bethania, on the eastern slope of the hill, not far from the summit.[715] Shortly after that date, the Franciscan Fathers rebuilt the chapel which the Crusaders had erected

[712] If the mention of Bethphage in the Greek text of Mark 11:1 is genuine.
[713] *"Villula,"* says St. Jerome.
[714] See Neubauer, *Géographie du Talmud*, p. 147.
[715] *Revue Archéologique*, December 1877, pp. 366–375.

there. Quite possibly this was the original location of Bethphage.

When Jesus arrived opposite this hamlet, He said to two of His disciples:

"Go ye into the village that is over against you, and immediately at your coming in thither, you shall find an ass tied and a colt with her, upon which no man yet hath sat. Loose him and bring him hither. And if any man shall say to you, What are you doing? say ye that the Lord hath need of him, and will immediately send him back hither." [716]

These words are remarkable, not only because of the precise details they contain, but also because of the tone of authority which they exhibit. Jesus here really speaks as Lord,[717] as the Messias, who, by virtue of that title, exercises the right of requisition among His people. The Master and the prophet appear together in this passage. Indeed there is hardly any room to doubt but that, according to the thought implied in the accounts, it was by virtue of His supernatural foreknowledge that Jesus knew what was going to take place. It has sometimes been supposed that there was a previous understanding between Him and the owner of the asses; but that is unlikely. As in other similar cases,[718] the Evangelists give us clearly to understand that our Lord was uttering a real prophecy. Was the owner personally acquainted with Christ? Was he already His disciple, as some have surmised? We do not know; but the hypothesis, while not necessary, is possible, since for some time past the Savior had frequented

[716] This last sentence we take from St. Mark's account, according to the most likely reading of the Greek text. It contains a promise intended to reassure the owners of the two animals. In the First Gospel, we read this variant: "And forthwith he [the owner] will let them go," that is, he will permit Jesus' disciples to lead them away.

[717] Ὁ Κύριος (Vulg., *Dominus*).

[718] Luke 22:10–13, 34; John 16:32; 21:18, etc.

the home of His friends at Bethania. The words "a colt upon which no man yet hath sat" are significant. In ancient times, both in the pagan world and among the Jews,[719] animals destined for a sacred use were kept in reserve, so as to be more worthy of such a purpose.

Everything had been providentially prepared according to the Savior's prediction. The two Apostles found the ass and the colt tied, as St. Mark says, "before the gate without [720] in the meeting of two ways," [721] and began to untie them. Thereupon some neighbors came, then the owners, asking the messengers: "Why loose you them?" The disciples answered as the Master had instructed them and were allowed to lead the two animals away.

In this whole matter the Savior's conduct was remarkable. Not only does He let His friends and the crowd offer Him the most magnificent homage; by the undertaking confided to His two Apostles, He Himself takes the direct, personal initiative of His triumph. It was His express and evident wish to enter Jerusalem solemnly as the Messias. Therefore He attends to the necessary preparations. It was not fitting that He should enter His capital on foot. But what an animal for a victor to ride, nay more, for the Messias, the greatest personage of history, to ride in His triumphal procession! Yet this very detail was symbolic, and expressed an important truth in conformity with the Messianic ideal. An earthly king, as the Messias was imagined to be by most Jews of the time, would have made his entry into his capital mounted on a charger, surrounded by brilliant officers and a large military

[719] Num. 19:2; Deut. 21:3; 1 Kings 6:10; Virgil, *Georg.*, IV, 54; Horace, *Epod.*, IX, 22, etc.

[720] St. Justin, *Apolog.*, I, 54, 14, gives an even more precise detail, saying that the colt was tied to a vine.

[721] Ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀμφόδου. Perhaps the Evangelist wished to designate by this expression, the road that went around the property. According to another opinion, the phrase refers to the path leading from the house to the highway.

escort, which would have advanced with flying banners to the sound of trumpets. Christ has a very real, but more modest triumph; all its manifestations are peaceful and bear a religious stamp. He enters Jerusalem seated upon an ass, as the "Prince of Peace," [722] as a spiritual king, as a Savior of souls. In acting thus, Christ knew that He was fulfilling the will of His heavenly Father, manifested many centuries before by an oracle of the prophet Zacharias,[723] which is cited by SS. Matthew and John on this occasion.[724] Literally translated from the Hebrew, it reads as follows:

"Thrill with joy, daughter of Sion!
Shout for joy, daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, thy king comes to thee.
He is just and protected [by God],
Lowly and seated upon an ass,
And upon a colt, the foal of an ass."

The words "Tell ye the daughter of Sion," which precede the quotation of the prophecy in St. Matthew's account, do not belong to Zacharias. The Evangelist takes them from Isaias,[725] and uses them as an introduction. St. John combines the first two hemistichs of the prophecy into one; the positive idea which they contain, he expresses in a negative form. Instead of "Thrill with joy" and "Shout for joy," he says: "Fear not." "Daughter of Sion" and "daughter of Jerusalem," in the poetical style of the Orient, designate the inhabitants of the Holy City. As to the substance of the prophecy, it clearly denotes the outwardly modest and peace-

[722] Is. 9:6.

[723] Zach. 9:9.

[724] Matt. 21:4 f.; John 12:14 f. St. John gives only its essential words. St. Matthew quotes it more completely, but also rather freely, although closer to the Hebrew than to the Septuagint: "Tell ye the daughter of Sion: Behold thy king cometh to thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of her that is used to the yoke." These last words refer to the ass.

[725] Is. 62:11.

ful character of the Messianic kingship. In appearing before His subjects to receive their homage, the Messias will repudiate all worldly pomp and will use only the adornments of peace and simplicity.

The detail about the ass and the colt occupies an important place in the prophecy of Zacharias, since it throws into strong relief that characteristic of humility and absence of triumphant glory. And so the two Evangelists stress this detail, because Christ fulfilled it literally on Palm Sunday. The ass which He rode certainly did not signify any warlike intentions. We should note, however, that the ass of Eastern countries is generally larger and stronger than the one usually seen in Europe and presents a more elegant appearance. From the earliest periods of Jewish history, the ass was ridden by rulers and other eminent personages, as well as by the lower classes of the people.[726] It is noteworthy that St. Matthew is the only one who simultaneously mentions—he does so twice[727]—the ass and the colt. Although the other Evangelists speak only of the colt, there is no doubt but that the mare was brought along with it as a measure of prudence, to make the colt more docile, because it had not yet been broken. That these animals might be more worthy of the service they were about to render, the disciples spread upon their backs the broad pieces of cloth, usually of a gaudy color, which served as cloaks.[728] Then they assisted their Master to mount the colt.[729]

Only then did the triumphal procession really begin. The Apostles and the more intimate disciples surrounded the

[726] Cf. Judg. 5:10; 10:4.

[727] Matt. 21:2, 7.

[728] St. John, in his brief narrative of this episode, omits all these details and merely says: "Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it."

[729] St. Luke: ἐπεβίβασαν (Vulg., *imposuerunt Jesum*); likewise St. Matthew, according to the Vulgate, which follows the variant ἐπεκάθισαν (*sedere fecerunt*), instead of the more probable reading, ἐπεκάθισεν, "He sat."

Savior. In front and behind there crowded a multitude, which grew larger and soon formed a considerable mob.[730] It was made up largely of pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover and had already been discussing among themselves the question whether Jesus would come to the festival.[731] The large number that accompanied our Lord from Jericho, had reported in Jerualem that He was stopping at Bethania. It is, therefore, not surprising that many of His followers, from Galilee, Peraea, and elsewhere, directed their steps, individually and in groups, towards that little village. It was more and more confidently hoped that at last He was going to let Himself be proclaimed Messias. The prospect of meeting Lazarus, whose recent resurrection aroused great enthusiasm, also brought others to Bethania. We may, then, suppose that several hundreds or even thousands of persons took part in the demonstration.

As soon as the Savior set out, the ovation commenced. Touching ceremonies were at once improvised. In imitation of the Apostles, those who were closest to the Divine Master spread their cloaks on the road like carpets. The same sort of thing had been done formerly by the Jews of Susan, for their celebrated fellow-townsman Mardochai;[732] the Persian soldiers did so likewise for King Xerxes, when he was about to cross the Hellespont.[733] And it also happened at Jerusalem in honor of the heroic Judas Machabeus, on the day when he purified the Temple, after recovering it from the pagans by whom it had been profaned.[734]

The whole length of the road followed by the triumphal

[730] St. Matthew: ὁ πλεῖστος ὄχλος (Vulg., *plurima turba*), ὄχλος (*turbae*); St. Luke: ἅπαν τὸ πλῆθος τῶν μαθητῶν (*omnes turbae discipulorum*); St. John: ὁ ὄχλος πολύς (*turba multa*), etc.

[731] John 11:56.

[732] *Targ. Esther*, VIII, 15.

[733] Herodotus, VII, 54.

[734] See 2 Mach. 10:7; also 4 Kings 9:13.

procession was bordered with olive trees, fig trees, and other trees or bushes, from which the crowd took branches, which they joyfully waved. They strewed the ground with foliage and grass. It was a magnificent demonstration, such as used to accompany the return of victorious kings.[735] A holy joy took possession of all and was manifested by these symbolic acts, so entirely in conformity with Oriental character. Presently it became so overflowing that it sought a still more eloquent expression in loud and hearty acclamations.

St. Luke says this cheering began "when [Jesus] was now coming near the descent of Mount Olivet," that is, after He had crossed the summit and had been some time following the road on the western slope. At a turn in the road a portion of the Holy City suddenly came into view, that part which rises at the southeast corner, upon the present Mount Sion, with its line of ramparts. A little farther on, the city appeared in all its splendor: in the foreground the Temple gleaming with gold and resplendent with white marble, surrounded by magnificent porticoes; farther back, a whole assemblage of palaces, gardens, edifices of many colors, houses rising one above the other; to right and left a charming undulation of hills, more densely wooded than to-day. Even now, although it is but a dim reflection of its ancient glory, Jerusalem, when viewed from that same spot, presents a splendid panorama, which cannot be forgotten by anybody who has seen it; what must it not have been when it was justly regarded, even by its enemies, as one of the wonders of the world? [736] Its ramparts and towers encompassed and framed it like a diadem symbolizing its strength. We may well suppose that, in the presence of that glorious sight, its beauty heightened by the charms of springtime, the enthusiasm of the crowd escorting our Lord knew no

[735] Livy, X, 47.

[736] Tacitus, *Hist.*, V, 8; Keim, *Geschichte Jesu*, III, 92; Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, *l. c.* See Volume I of this work, p. 118.

bounds. Another reason for the acclamations which burst forth was the vivid remembrance of the miracles performed by the Savior,[737] especially the most brilliant of them all—the raising of Lazarus.

The sacred writers have recorded the acclamations that continued until the very moment of the triumphal entry. It will be interesting to place them before the reader as they are cited by each of the Evangelists. According to St. Matthew: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest [of heaven]!" According to St. Mark: "Hosanna! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh! Hosanna in the highest [of heaven]!" According to St. Luke: "Blessed be the King who cometh in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory on high!" According to St. John: "Hosanna! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel!" Save for slight differences, we have in all four Gospels the same acclamations, some addressed to Jesus and plainly recognizing Him as the Messias of Israel and welcoming Him, others addressed to His heavenly Father, who chose Him and sent Him to reëstablish, in a spiritual but very real and glorious manner, the kingdom once founded by David, His ancestor, and proclaimed by the prophets. Most of these acclamations were taken from verses 25 and 26 of Psalm 117 (118 in the Hebrew Bible), which were frequently applied to the Messias, as may be seen from the rabbinical writings, and which were sung during the procession around the altar of holocausts at the feast of Tabernacles.[738]

The exclamation *Hosanna,* which, with *Amen* and *Alleluia,* has passed into the Christian liturgy, is a Hebrew expression composed of two words, meaning literally: "Save there-

[737] Luke 19:37; John 12:17.

[738] Edersheim, *The Temple, its Ministry and Services,* p. 242.

fore!" [739] At first it was a prayer to God for protection. But it lost its primitive meaning and, as in the present case, became a simple acclamation, a wish for happiness and prosperity. The *Hosanna,* after greeting Jesus as Messias, rose to God, enthroned in the heights of Heaven, thanking Him for sending His Christ, who had been so earnestly longed for.[740]

The most important idea in these hearty exclamations is contained in the words "Blessed be the King of Israel," and "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David"; these expressions unquestionably give the acclamations a Messianic character. Their religious character is equally evident. St. Luke stresses this trait by introducing them with a significant phrase: "The whole multitude of His disciples began with joy to praise God with a loud voice, . . . saying: Blessed be . . ." These were pious shouts, which were joyfully repeated and echoed back and forth through the crowd.

The enthusiasm continued to increase. The procession coming from Bethania and Bethphage was met, perhaps at the spot we have described, by another, which had set out from Jerusalem and was likewise made up of numerous pilgrims carrying palm branches [741]—the carrying of palm branches was a ceremony of the feast of Tabernacles [742]—to show Jesus that they acknowledged Him to be the Messias-King. Among the Jews, as among the pagans, palms were one of the usual decorations employed at popular ovations in honor of kings and victorious generals.[743]

Mostly to St. Luke, but partly also to St. John,[744] we owe

[739] *Hosha na.* The complete form was *hoshiah na.* Ps. 19:25 (Hebr., 20:25).

[740] In place of the Hebrew *hosanna,* St. Luke uses the word δόξα, "glory," which was clearer for his readers of pagan origin. The final acclamation, as cited by him, recalls the angelic doxology at Bethlehem (Luke 2:14).

[741] St. John furnishes this detail (12:13), from which comes the liturgical *Dominica palmarum.*

[742] Josephus, *Ant.,* XIII, xiii, 5.

[743] See 1 Mach. 13:51; 2 Mach. 10:7, etc.

[744] Luke 19:39–44; John 12:19.

the account of two incidents that cast a passing cloud of sadness over this glorious manifestation. From the earliest days of our Lord's public life, we have nearly everywhere met the Pharisees dogging His footsteps, engaged in spying on Him, "tempting" Him, accusing Him. Jealousy and hatred had drawn many of them to this demonstration. We may readily surmise the sort of impression they received from it. Some merely exchanged a few words betraying the bitterness of their hearts: "Do you see," they said to one another, "that we prevail nothing? Behold, the whole world is gone after Him." These ardent partisans thus blamed their more timid colleagues for the unorganized and consequently ineffective character of their half-way measures. Why had there not been more energetic steps taken against Jesus from the very start? It was true that "the whole world is gone after Him." At that hour, their influence vanished in the presence of His, which had enormously increased during the previous weeks.

Others there were who did not hesitate to question the Savior directly, urging Him to put a stop to a scene which they looked upon as sacrilegious. Hiding their rancor and anger under a title of respect, they say: "Master, rebuke Thy disciples." Jesus, breaking the majestic silence that He seems to have observed during His triumphal procession,[745] shows, in His brief reply, the strangeness and indiscretion of their interference: "I say to you, that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out." He uses this proverbial saying [746] to justify, in the face of His enemies, the conduct of His disciples and of the multitude: their action was a providential necessity. Personally He accepts as a sacred debt all the homage paid Him; it so fitted into the divine plan in His regard

[745] The Evangelists quote only two sayings by Him at this time, the two here cited.

[746] It is used by the prophet Habacuc, 2:11; by Virgil, *Eclog.*, V, 28; by Ovid, *Metamorph.*, II, 697; by Cicero, *Marcell.*, etc.

that if men had not given Him this honor, the very stones—a type of the most unfeeling things in nature—would have shouted His glory.

The Pharisees, the Scribes, and the religious leaders in general, were then the more incensed and humiliated, as Jesus and His followers showed themselves more independent and daring. Quite recently [747] the Sanhedrin had decreed that whosoever should know of the place of Christ's retreat should at once report it, so that He might be arrested without delay. And here He was, entering Jerusalem, accompanied by a countless multitude paying Him royal honors and even regarding Him as the Messias. What rage must have been in their murderous hearts!

The second episode was deeply pathetic. Contemplating the Holy City, as the procession drew near it,[748] Jesus recalled its history in a few words: in the past it was a most loving history on God's part, for He had showered all sorts of blessings upon the capital of His kingdom; at present it was a history mostly composed of ingratitude and unbelief, which for the Savior was to lead, in a few days, to Gethsemani and Golgotha; in the future, it would be a history of the terrible but just reprisals of Heaven, for it was on the Mount of Olives, forty years later, that Titus entrenched the camp from which he besieged the city and took it by assault.[749] Christ was deeply moved at the sight of these tragic mental pictures. In the very midst of His triumphal march, His soul experienced feelings of sorrow, as no other soul could; and He burst into tears.[750] Then He gave expression to His grief, describing in advance the sad fate that would soon befall the guilty city. He said:

[747] John 11:56.

[748] Luke 19:41.

[749] Josephus, *Bell. Iud.*, II, i–iii.

[750] In the Greek, ἔκλαυσεν. At Lazarus' tomb, He had merely wept in silence, ἐδάκρυσεν (John 11:35).

"If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are to thy peace; but now they are hidden from thy eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee and compass thee round and straiten thee on every side and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee; and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone: because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation."

We can read between these lines the anguish that clutched the Savior's loving heart. This prophecy is impressive, not only on account of the evils it foretells, but, from a literary standpoint, in its vibrant short sentences, joined together simply by the conjunction "and," as also by the emphatic repetition of the pronouns "thou," "thy." [751] What a contrast between the majestic city then standing before our Lord, and the description of its future destruction, a prophecy which was literally fulfilled.[752]

After a short halt, the Savior resumed His march and descended the western slope of the hill. He then crossed the usually dry bed of the Cedron and entered the city, preceded by hundreds of pilgrims, who continued their acclamations. Jerusalem at that time was filled with strangers, who had come from all parts of Palestine and of the Roman Empire to take part in the Paschal festival. The sight of this unexpected procession caused a sensation among the people. The whole city was shaken.[753] Thirty-three years before, it had also been disturbed about Jesus; [754] but at that time there were merely some foreigners announcing His birth, whereas on this day

[751] Within the space of three verses, we find it used twelve times in various forms (*σν, σου, σε, σοι*).

[752] This is particularly true with regard to the intrenchment (in Greek, *χάραξ*) with which the Romans surrounded the city. The *χάραξ* was a palisade made of stakes, strengthened by the addition of branches and earth, and usually provided with a ditch. In a sally, the Jews succeeded in burning this palisade, but Titus replaced it with a solid wall.

[753] As if by an earthquake, says the Greek: *ἐσείσθη*.

[754] Matt. 2:3.

He came in person and triumphantly entered the metropolis of the Messianic kingdom. Diverse feelings, love, hatred, hope, fear, and doubt filled the hearts of all. "Who is this?" some asked, who did not know Jesus or who did not know the reason for such an ovation. His disciples and followers proudly answered: "This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth of Galilee." This title, on their lips, under such circumstances, was evidently equivalent to that of Messias, since those using it had just led their Master into the city as the Messias.

Additional crowds of people must then have joined the procession, which soon reached the Temple, where it was natural they should introduce Christ, the Son of David, as into His sacred residence. This detail is characteristic, showing the religious nature and purpose of the ovation. A crowd wishing to honor a magistrate brings him to the city's public square; an ordinary prince it accompanies to his palace; but, as a place for the ending of the Messias' triumphal procession, only the Temple was suitable. The following detail we owe to St. Mark, who obtained it from St. Peter: our Lord, after entering the court of the Temple, rapidly inspected everything, in the manner of a master. Then, while the crowd was slowly dispersing (it was already late) He returned with His Apostles to Bethania, to spend the night there. His purpose was accomplished, for He had not gone to the Temple that day to pray or to teach, but to be enthroned as Messias-King. It was a fitting close of that great day, unique in the life of the Lord.

We must now inquire how it was possible that, five days later, He who had been acclaimed with such demonstrations of faith and love, was led through the streets of that same city to a spot where He was atrociously put to death. How are we to reconcile these two contradictory facts—the *Hosannas* of Palm Sunday and the *Tolle, crucifige* of Good Friday? In a general way they are easily reconciled if we

but think of the instability of popular favor, which the Romans expressed proverbially by saying that the Tarpeian rock was near the Capitol. A special and more exact explanation of this problem is that the multitudes from whom Christ received His one-day triumph were not, as a whole, the same as those who later demanded His death. From Bethania to Jerusalem, our Lord was acclaimed by more or less intimate and fervent disciples, a large number of them Galileans, with whom there joined, in a demonstration of enthusiasm, other pilgrims, who saw the Savior for the first time. On the other hand, the cries of death on Good Friday were uttered principally by inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea, who for the most part had never ceased to be hostile to Jesus. Other Jews, coming from afar, influenced by the part which the leaders of the people took in the Savior's arrest and condemnation, joined with those who demanded His death, thinking Him really guilty. If some of those who had followed our Lord in His triumphal procession on Palm Sunday took their stand among His enemies five days later, they cannot have been very numerous. They were shallow men, without deep conviction, men who changed their opinion when they observed that the Messianic dignity claimed by our Lord was entirely in opposition to theirs. In spite of all this, who would have thought, with mere human foresight, when beholding so glorious a triumph, that so quick a change in popular feeling would occur, that a few days later the acclaimed Hero would pass through the city bearing a heavy cross, upon which He would draw His last breath amidst cruel physical and moral tortures? [755]

St. John, after quoting Zacharias' prophecy, makes a remark that is surprising at first glance: [756] "These things His disciples did not know at the first; but when Jesus was glori-

[755] See Appendix IV.

[756] John 12:16.

fied,[757] then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him." The Evangelist evidently does not mean that the Apostles and disciples, in paying Jesus such great honors, were ignorant of the import of their act. They knew quite well that its direct purpose was to enthrone their Master as Messias, as clearly appears from the four narratives. St. John simply means that the disciples were not yet able to grasp the full significance of Christ's triumph, or its relation to the prophecy of Zacharias.

[757] That is, after His Resurrection and Ascension.

CHAPTER II

Christ as Master in the Temple

CHRIST'S triumph continues, but in a new form. For two days, Monday and Tuesday of Holy Week, we see Him exercising His Messianic authority by deeds and words in the presence of His enemies. His conduct is truly that of a king enthroned in his palace. His bitterest and most powerful foes are compelled, in spite of themselves, to forego for the time being the execution of their murderous schemes against Him.

I. Monday of Holy Week: Cursing of the Fig Tree; Driving the Sellers from the Temple

The episode of the cursing of the fig tree is related only by St. Matthew and St. Mark.[758] The author of the Second Gospel, who is so fond of historical perspective, clearly distinguishes two acts in this little drama: the fig tree was cursed on Monday morning; but not until dawn on Tuesday did the Apostles note the fulfilment of the sentence pronounced by their Master. The account is, in reality, the same in the First Gospel; but St. Matthew here, as in many other instances, sacrifices the chronological for the logical order. He relates the incident as though it had taken place all at once, whereas it had two separate phases. The two Evangelists are in agreement as to the date of this miracle: Jesus performed it on the day after His triumphal entry into the Holy City.

On Sunday evening, as we have seen, our Lord went to

[758] Matt. 21: 18–22; Mark 11: 12–14, 20–24.

Bethania. Very early Monday morning,[759] He left this quiet retreat and in company with His Apostles returned to Jerusalem. While on the way, "He was hungry." This fact was not surprising if we consider the exhausting fatigues and emotions of the day before and especially if we suppose, as is likely, that Jesus spent part of the night in prayer. To explain this hunger, there is no need to resort to a fiction or a miracle. Of what use is it to adopt such a subterfuge, since Jesus had taken our nature with all its weaknesses, sin only excepted? The Savior, perceiving a solitary fig tree at the roadside, a little distance away,[760] which was covered by foliage, although the season was not yet far advanced, went up to it to see whether He would find [761] any figs upon it. But He found only leaves.

A few words of explanation are needed to present the Savior's conduct in its true light. Let us first completely set aside His supernatural foreknowledge, which is not in question here. When He went to the tree, He knew full well that it had no fruit on it; but at this point He is acting as man. The fig tree bears fruit, in an embryo state, a considerable time before it becomes covered with leaves.[762] But at Jerusalem early figs are not ripe until June, the summer figs hardly until August.[763] Therefore St. Mark takes pains to note expressly that "it was not the time for figs." But the presence of luxuriant foliage on this tree, thus manifesting an extraordinary precocity, whether because it was planted in more fertile soil or because it had a better exposure, allowed one to

[759] Πρώι, we read at the beginning of St. Matthew's account. St. Mark (1:35) uses this word to designate the last "watch" of the night, which was from 3 to 6 o'clock in the morning.

[760] St. Matthew: *συκῆν μίαν.*

[761] St. Mark: *εἰ ἄρα* (Vulg., *si forte*), "if perhaps."

[762] *"Ei demum serius folium nascitur quam pomum."* Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, XVI, xxvi, 49.

[763] Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible*, p. 352; Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, p. 349; Lagrange, *L'Évangile selon S. Marc*, p. 275.

think that it bore ripe fruit, although it was then only the end of March or the beginning of April. On the contrary, it was a barren tree, uselessly encumbering the ground. Then, treating it as though it were a being endowed with reason, a free and responsible agent, Jesus condemned it in these words: "May no man hereafter eat fruit of thee any more for ever." [764] The sentence was immediately carried out, as St. Matthew remarks; but its effect did not appear until the next day, as we see from the rest of the account.

Such an anathema against a soulless being would be hard to explain,[765] especially coming from our Lord, if it were not for the fact that it contains a striking symbol. But all becomes clear if, with Bossuet [766] (following Origen and St. Jerome) and most early and modern commentators, we reflect that "it is a parable, not in words, but in things, like the parable we find verbally expressed in St. Luke 13:6.

A resemblance is evident between the parable of the fig tree, quoted above,[767] and the anathema just cited, for in both cases we have the same thought: the threat of punishment directed against a barren tree; with this difference, however, that in the parable the threat is conditional, while in the present case it is absolute. Moreover, the fig tree obviously is not threatened or punished on its own account, since it could not be held accountable for its barrenness. In both texts, the tree symbolically stands for the Jewish nation. For many centuries that nation had received a great abundance of divine favors, and was eminently superior to others, owing to its legislation and its form of worship, its prophets, and its belief in the true God; [768] yet, through its own fault, it was unfortunately

[764] The language is unusually forceful, especially in the Greek text of St. Mark: *μηκέτι ἐκ σοῦ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα οὐδεὶς καρπὸν φάθοι.*

[765] See Appendix V.

[766] *Méditations sur l'Évangile,* last week, 20th day.

[767] Page 115.

[768] Cf. Rom. 9:4 f.

destitute of fruit or merits, and concealed the emptiness and even malice of its works beneath fine appearances. The divine Husbandman, therefore, by this expressive figure, declares that He will strike it with the axe.[769] Several of our Lord's discourses on Holy Tuesday form a vivid commentary on this well-deserved malediction.[770]

It was not without astonishment that the disciples heard this condemnation.[771] At first, however, they did not reflect upon it. In company with their Master they entered the city and went into the Temple, where He performed a still more striking act, in all respects similar to that which He had performed at the beginning of His public life.[772] In now performing this deed a second time,[773] He continued to affirm His office of Messias-King. At the close of the popular ovation on the previous day,[774] He turned a scrutinizing look on all sides in the sacred precincts—the look of the master. This inspection revealed many abuses. What He had earlier suppressed with such courageous and forceful wrath, was again introduced little by little, owing to the selfishness and negligence of a debased priesthood. Again the merchants who sold beasts and birds intended for the sacrifices had installed them-

[769] See the commentaries on this passage of St. Matthew's Gospel; *e. g.*, those of Origen, St. John Chrysostom, St. Hilary, St. Jerome, Ven. Bede, Maldonatus, and Knabenbauer.

[770] Cf. Matt. 21:28–44; 22:1–14; chaps. 23, 24, 25, and the parallel passages of St. Mark and St. Luke. During the triumphal procession of the previous day, our Lord had clearly foretold the coming destruction of Jerusalem and of the Jewish state.

[771] St. Mark (11:14) says that the disciples heard it.

[772] John 2:13–22.

[773] On the differences between the two events, see Volume II, page 95, and *infra*, Appendix VI. The Synoptics relate only one expulsion of the sellers from the Temple, and St. John relates only one; this they do to avoid useless repetition.

[774] St. Matthew and St. Luke insert this event immediately after the triumphal entry, because it was its natural consequence. Moreover, St. Luke is silent about the cursing of the fig tree. St. Mark continues to give the various episodes in proper chronological order.

selves in the Court of the Gentiles; again the bankers and money-changers had brought in their little tables with coins; [775] again these traffickers were exacting usurious rates from pilgrims in need of their services.[776] If this market or bazaar was necessary, why was it not relegated to some place outside the Temple walls? "It was a curious preparation for that recollection which was suited to the holy place, to be obliged to work one's way through a boisterous throng of merchants arguing or quarreling with customers, or to have to pass through the midst of animals that blocked the way and were surrounded by buyers and on-lookers." [777]

Once again, therefore, by an impressive act of authority, Jesus restored to His Father's house the honor and quiet which had been unworthily taken away from it. With holy indignation He began to drive out buyers and sellers, animals and people; He overturned the tables of the money-changers with the gold and silver lying thereon, as also the cages of the dove-merchants. In justifying His action, He quoted the ancient prophets, in words of protest against these sinful profanations. To the large crowd gathered around Him, He said: "Is it not written: My house shall be called the house of prayer to all nations? But you have made it a den of thieves." Our Lord here combines two texts, the first taken from Isaias, the other from Jeremias.[778] What a contrast they express! A house destined for public worship and fervent prayer, sacrilegiously changed into a den where thieves hide their ill-gotten spoils! The Savior expanded these thoughts [779] and, to

[775] For details, the reader is referred to the more extended description, Volume II, p. 92.

[776] They went so far as to sell a dove at the exorbitant price of a gold *denarius*. Cf. Derenbourg, *Essai sur l'Histoire et la Géographie de Palestine d'après les Thalmuds*, p. 467.

[777] Reuss, *Histoire Évangélique*, p. 555.

[778] Is. 56:7; Jer. 7:11.

[779] Mark 11:17: "He taught." The verb is in the imperfect tense, expressing continued action.

inspire His hearers with a greater respect for the holy place, showed them how unbecoming and irreverent it was for people to cross the sacred courts, carrying all manner of profane objects, merely to save a detour through the streets of the city.[780]

Thus, without anyone daring to resist or even protest, was enacted this avenging scene, in which Christ restored to the house of God, for a few days at least, the honor that had been taken from it. All yielded to the dominance of His irresistible will.[781] The conscience of the guilty ones condemned them; that of the other witnesses approved our Lord's act, and He thus remained the undisputed master of the field.

Following this impressive episode,[782] there occurred two incidents of a wholly different kind,[783] exemplifying the Savior's kindness of heart. In the Acts of the Apostles [784] we are told that cripples and other unfortunates begged alms at the gates of the Temple. Some of them—the Evangelist specifically mentions the lame and the blind—came to Jesus after quiet had been restored. He took pity on them and cured them all. Then some children [785]—perhaps, as has been sur-

[780] Many people must have shown this disrespect by habitually entering the sacred precincts through the gate which opened on the Cedron valley, and leaving by another gate which opened on the south or west side of the Court of the Gentiles. They thus avoided a much longer, round-about way. The Talmud records a rule similar to that laid down by our Lord. *Bab. Jebam.*, 6, 2: *"Quaenam est reverentia templi? Ne quis eat in montem domus* [*i. e.*, into the Court of the Gentiles] *cum baculo suo et calceis suis, erumena sua. . . . Non per illud viam faciat locum sputationis."* (Cf. *Megill.*, 27, 2.)

[781] On whether a miraculous character should be attributed to the two expulsions of the sellers, see Fillion, *Les Miracles de N. S. Jésus-Christ*, II, 316–319. We think that there was at least a miracle of the moral order, a remarkable victory over hostile wills.

[782] Matt. 21:12 f.; Mark 11:15–17; Luke 19:45 f.

[783] Related by St. Matthew, 21:14–16.

[784] Acts 3:2.

[785] The Greek text uses the noun *παῖδες*. They were, therefore, children above the age of infancy, not *παιδία*, "infants," such as are mentioned on several previous occasions. (Cf. Matt. 14:21; 18:3.)

mised, those of the priests and Levites—[786] approached the Master, and their little voices reëchoed through the porticoes of the Temple as they cried out: "Hosanna to the Son of David!" In this way did they celebrate His praise, repeating the most expressive of the acclamations which they had heard the day before.

But there was another side to the picture. The events that had just taken place—the triumphal entry, the driving out of the sellers, the curing of the sick, and the children's acclaim —stirred the wrath of the chief priests and Scribes to the highest degree.[787] As the Pharisees had remarked on the previous day,[788] they were not succeeding against Jesus. The more they undertook to obstruct His ministry and lessen His influence with the multitudes, the more His popularity continued to grow. On these days the people hastened to the Temple early in the morning to hear His words, which He bestowed on them with untiring zeal.[789] They "hung" on His lips, says St. Luke,[790] who uses an expression that was a favorite one with ancient Roman writers.[791] In short, the masses showed such friendliness for Him, and formed so solid a rampart about Him, that His adversaries, notwithstanding their eager desire and firm determination to put Him to death, did not venture to carry out their sinister purpose.

Yet many of them, hearing the children's "Hosanna," said to Him: "Hearest Thou what these [792] say?" This question evidently meant: Don't you notice that they speak of you as

[786] From the example of our Lord Himself (Luke 2:42) we know that Jewish children often went with their parents to Jerusalem for the great feasts.

[787] Matt. 21:16; Mark 11:18; Luke 19:47 f. All three narratives stress this fact. St. Mark and St. Luke speak in general terms; St. Matthew cites a special instance.

[788] John 12:19.

[789] Luke 21:38.

[790] Luke 19:48.

[791] Virgil, *Aene.*, IV, 79 (*pendent ex ore*); Ovid, *Her.*, I, 30; Horace, *Ep.*, I, 105, etc.

[792] The pronoun is by way of contempt, as in many other passages.

though you were the Messias; and will you tolerate such a blasphemy? Are you not going to silence these children, who know not what they say? He replied: "Yea [I hear it]"; and He asked them: "Have you never read: Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?" The author of the eighth Psalm (verse 3) first addressed these words to the God of Israel, to show that He deigns to take pleasure in being praised and glorified [793] by what is smallest and lowliest. Jesus, by applying the text to Himself, regards His young friends as forming a chorus of prophets unaware of their prophecy, but speaking under divine impulse.

The religious leaders, hearing this proud and just reply, were scarcely able to restrain their anger; but what could they do, as long as the people so enthusiastically followed Jesus? The Savior was therefore able, on that day, to teach without anybody daring to lay hands on Him. Nevertheless, during these last days, by way of prudence and in order not to be hindered in the exercise of His ministry so long as His hour had not yet come, He withdrew to Bethania—as He did that evening—or to the Mount of Olives.[794] Each morning He returned to the Temple.

II. Tuesday of Holy Week: The Great Conflict between Christ and His Enemies

It was Monday morning of Holy Week when Jesus cursed the barren fig tree. In the evening, when the Apostles were returning to Bethania with their Master, they had not observed the terrible effect of the anathema, whether because

[793] Instead of the words: "Thou hast drawn praise," cited according to the Septuagint translation, and better adapted to the actual circumstances, the Hebrew text, with a slight difference, has: "Thou hast established a strength."

[794] Matt. 21:17; Mark 11:19; Luke 21:37 f. The rabbinical writings tell us that at Paschal time many pilgrims, unable to find lodging in Jerusalem, passed the night on Mount Olivet.

darkness had already fallen or because they went by a different road. But on Tuesday, when they were coming back to the Holy City early in the morning, they perceived that the leaves of the fig tree were completely dried up and lying along the branches. Evidently the tree was dead. At this sight Peter, speaking in the name of the Twelve, as he frequently did, said: "Rabbi, behold the fig tree which Thou didst curse, is withered away." The disciples' amazement [795] may perhaps have been due to the fact that Jesus had condemned the tree only to perpetual barrenness, not to an immediate death.

The Divine Master took advantage of the occasion to repeat to His Apostles an important lesson which He had already given them with regard to the irresistible power of faith,[796] without going into any explanation about the fig tree, for He knew the future would furnish the explanation. He said to them: [797]

"Have the faith of God. Amen I say to you, that whosoever shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed and be cast into the sea, and shall not stagger in his heart, but believe that whatsoever he saith shall be done; it shall be done unto him. Therefore I say unto you, all things, whatsoever you ask when ye pray, believe that you shall receive; and they shall come unto you. And when you shall stand to pray,[798] forgive, if you have aught against any man; that your Father also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your sins. But if you will not forgive, neither will your Father that is in heaven, forgive you your sins." [799]

To obtain the *omnipotentia supplex* promised by the Savior, two conditions are indispensable. This power will be his who

[795] St. Matthew: ἐθαύμασαν (Vulg., *mirati sunt*, "they wondered").

[796] Matt. 17:19, and Luke 17:6.

[797] Matt. 21:21 f.; Mark 11:22–26. St. Matthew's account is very condensed. We quote our Lord's words according to St. Mark.

[798] The Jews usually stood up when they prayed. Cf. Matt. 6:5, etc.

[799] The final phrase, which is not found in the best Greek manuscripts, was undoubtedly added later on. It is taken from Matt. 6:15.

possesses a lively, unbounded faith and who practices Christian charity to its full extent by generously forgiving those of his brethren who have offended him. The mountain that our Lord pointed to must have been the Mount of Olives on which He then was. The sea referred to was probably not the Mediterranean, but the Dead Sea, which can be seen in the distant east from the top of Mount Olivet. Christ's words in this text are somewhat "in the nature of a proverb," [800] and hence are hyperbolical. As Victor of Antioch, the earliest commentator on the Second Gospel, says, Jesus does not promise to the first comer a power to perform useless miracles.[801]

After the Savior reached the Temple, according to a detail mentioned by St. Mark, "He was walking" for some time in the Temple courts, which were filled with pilgrims during these days of preparation for the Paschal festival. He was soon recognized, and a large crowd gathered about Him, whereupon He began to teach and "to preach the gospel," says St. Luke. Most willingly He exercised His office as preacher of the glad tidings. We are much impressed by His zeal in devoting the last hours of His life to the instruction of these sheep of Israel whom evil shepherds were leading astray.

On Monday the religious leaders, intimidated by the success of His triumphal entry, thought the time inopportune, perchance even dangerous, to interfere or contend with Him. Then they regained their self-confidence and formed a plan which they thought must assuredly issue in His crushing defeat. They would attack Him one after the other—members of the Sanhedrin, Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees; they would lay clever snares for Him, in such wise as to compromise Him before His countrymen and before the

[800] Lagrange, *L'Évangile selon S. Marc*, p. 281.

[801] St. Paul alludes to this promise of Christ, when he writes (1 Cor. 13:2): "If I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains . . ."

Romans, while they waited for a chance to seize Him and put Him to death. What a day that was for Him! It was the last day of His active ministry, the last that He passed in the Temple engaged in the work of teaching. It was a day of repeated victories, and of mighty prophecies about the future of Jerusalem, of the Jewish people, and of the end of the world. The Synoptics relate its smallest incidents, and St. John supplements their accounts by remarks about the obduracy of the Jews toward the Savior.

A delegation of the Sanhedrin, made up of several of the chief priests, lawyers, and notables,[802] were awaiting this opportunity to begin what has been called "the great conflict" with Jesus. Coming upon Him unexpectedly,[803] they opened a way for themselves through the dense throng gathered about Him. When they reached Him, they asked Him this double question, in the haughty tone of a self-confident behest: "By what authority dost Thou these things? and who hath given Thee this authority that Thou shouldst do these things?" The strife was thus begun upon a point of capital importance: the exercise of the rights which Jesus claimed, especially in these latter days. As we may infer from the context, "these things," [804] alluded to by the questioners, were the triumphal entry and the driving out of the sellers—events which had created a stir in the city and even in the Temple. The first part of the question asked our Lord what personal authority He had to act as He did. For example, was He a prophet, or a reformer? In a word, what was His commission? The second part of the question asked Him from whom His authority

[802] St. Mark and St. Luke enumerate the three classes: the chief priests, the Scribes, and the ancients. St. Matthew abridges and does not mention the Scribes. It is commonly supposed that the Great Council did not come with all its members, but sent an official delegation to Christ.

[803] The verb ἐπέστησαν, used by St. Luke, ordinarily has this meaning, and also indicates hostile intent.

[804] The three narratives use the pronoun ταῦτα (Vulg., *haec*).

had been received, on the supposition that His credentials were genuine.

At an earlier date the Sanhedrin had put a similar question to John the Baptist,[805] although with less perfidious intent. That interference was to some extent justified, because the first duty of the leaders of Judaism was to safeguard the purity of doctrine. But, after the repeated and manifest proofs which Jesus had given of His divine mission, the present step by the Sanhedrin was but an additional indignity, concealed beneath the outward form of legality. Three years earlier Nicodemus said: "Rabbi, we know that Thou art come a teacher from God; for no man can do these signs which Thou dost, unless God be with him." [806] Compared with such a guaranty, what was the worth of a rabbi's diploma issued by a Hillel or a Gamaliel? But this made no difference to the Savior's enemies, since, in thus seeking to force Him to justify, in the presence of the attentive multitude, the exercise of powers which they unjustly arrogated to themselves, their sole purpose was to place Him in an embarrassing position. They were confident He would be unable to give them a satisfactory answer. On the contrary—a possibility they had scarcely foreseen—they are caught in their own trap.

Jesus did not reply directly to their question, so clearly hostile was their purpose. He merely said to them, with wonderful calmness and appropriateness: "I also will ask you one word,[807] which if you shall tell Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven or from men?" This amounted to asking: Was John the Baptist a prophet or an impostor? These few words thwarted the maneuver of the adversaries. The dilemma

[805] John 1:19–28.

[806] John 3:2.

[807] "Ενα λόγον, according to St. Matthew and St. Mark (Vulg., *unum sermonem, unum verbum*). In the Third Gospel we have simply λόγον.

was unanswerable, and the fact at the base of it, namely, the Baptist's ministry,[808] was the more apt since the most favorable testimony to Christ's Messianic character that had come from human lips was precisely that of the Baptist.[809] To acknowledge the divinity of John's mission would be to admit that our Lord's mission was also divine. The Sanhedrin's delegates easily comprehended this. In great embarrassment, they began to discuss among themselves what answer they could make. They said to one another: "If we shall say: From heaven, He will say to us: Why then did you not believe him? But if we shall say: From men, we are afraid of the multitude;[810] for all held John as a prophet." How those hypocrites weighed the pros and cons! Not thus will they discover an honorable way out of the false situation into which they have brought themselves. They will but aggravate the predicament, when they permit themselves to be guided by their own interests rather than by truth.

They replied: "We know not." That was a pure lie; it was also a stupid subterfuge from every point of view. By declaring themselves unable to judge the nature of the Baptist's ministry, they also showed themselves incapable of passing judgment on the origin of the Savior's mission. What a disgrace and humiliation it must have been for them to abdicate their authority in such an essential matter! They perceived this, when the Savior closed the discussion by saying:

[808] Christ designates it by the ceremony that gave it its special character and that summed up its purpose and effects: the symbolic baptism from which John received his famous surname.

[809] Cf. Matt. 3:11 f.; Mark 1:7 f.; Luke 3:15–18; and especially John 1:25–27, 29–36; 3:28–36.

[810] St. Luke has this interesting variant, which may well be an exact report of the original words: "The whole people will stone us." In this concrete form, their fear was not at all imaginary; among the Jews, stoning was the legal penalty for religious crimes, and at times the crowds did not hesitate to inflict it spontaneously and summarily. See, for St. Stephen, Acts, 7:56–59, and, for Christ Himself, John, 10:31.

"Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things." Nor did they deserve an answer, since they refused to fulfil the condition which they had tacitly accepted.[811]

Jesus thereupon assumed the offensive and attacked His enemies with great vigor. First He made use of three parables, which, like those of the ten virgins and of the talents, which we shall consider further on,[812] belong to the third group mentioned previously.[813] Like the parables of the first group, they are about the Kingdom of God, but from a different point of view, for they consider it especially as it will be at the time of its consummation, at the end of the world. Only one of them, that of the wicked husbandmen, is to be found in all three Synoptics; and it is also the most significant. The two other parables are special to St. Matthew's Gospel.[814]

The first and shortest is the parable of the two sons.[815] It begins as follows:

"What think you? A certain man had two sons; and coming to the first, he said: Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. And he answering, said: I will not. But afterwards, being moved with repentance, he went. And coming to the other, he said in like manner. And he answering, said: I go, Sir; and he went not."

The first son's words, "I will not," are grossly outrageous. The second son's apparent acceptance of his father's com-

[811] Matt. 21:23–27; Mark 11:27–33; Luke 20:1–8.

[812] Matt. 25:1–30.

[813] Volume II, pp. 402 f.

[814] Of all the Savior's parables, only three have been recorded by all the Synoptics: the parable of the wicked husbandmen, that of the mustard seed, and that of the leaven.

[815] Matt. 21:28–32. In some ancient manuscripts of the Greek text, the order is inverted, as remarked by Origen, St. Jerome, and other Fathers: the son who says "I will not" is placed second. See Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus,* 2d ed., p. 618, note.

mand is affectedly polite,[816] but only makes his hypocritical disobedience the more conspicuous. As in other Gospel parables, the father stands for the God of Israel, inviting various categories of His people to labor in His mystical vineyard, so as to make it bring forth abundant fruit.

Having finished the little story, our Lord made its application more pointed by asking His adversaries: "Which of the two did the father's will?" The answer was obvious. "The first," they said. Although this son had shamefully refused to do his father's bidding, he later repented and did, in fact, obey, whereas the second son, by his conduct, promptly contradicted and nullified his fair-spoken acceptance of his father's command. In strong language Christ then made a clearer and more complete application of the parable, saying: "Amen I say to you, that the publicans and the harlots shall go into the Kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of justice, and you did not believe him. But the publicans and the harlots believed him; but you, seeing it, did not even afterwards repent, that you might believe him."

The second son represents the great mass of the Jews, more especially their spiritual leaders and the members of the Sanhedrin to whom our Lord was then talking. The first son was a type of sinners of all kinds and of the publicans, who were converted by the Baptist's preaching.[817] The theocratic nation, for the most part, seemed at first to bow deferentially to every expression of the divine will; but that was only an outward and ephemeral deference. Its emphatic "Yes" almost at once became a "No" from the practical standpoint. The others, on the contrary, after answering the divine call by an insolent

[816] In the Greek: ἔγω κύριε. Literally: "I, Sir." The Vulgate renders the sense correctly, "I go, Sir."

[817] "The way of justice" may signify either the precursor's personal holiness, or the admirable advice he gave to those whom he converted. The latter meaning seems to be the better here.

refusal, had become better disposed and were eager to repair their faults by complete obedience to the divine commands. And this fine example had been given by the most despised portion of the Jewish nation. Therefore it will be their privilege to enter the Kingdom of God ahead of the proud religious rulers, the hypocritical Pharisees, and all those who let themselves be guided by them. And how many, even of these people who thought themselves sure of salvation, would be forever excluded from the Messianic kingdom!

The representatives of the Sanhedrin, so haughty when they started the discussion with our Lord, now stood before Him in an humbled attitude of embarrassment. Their confusion became greater when He spoke the second parable, that of the wicked husbandmen. This parable, tragic in its simplicity, contains a somber and impressive prophecy against the Jewish people and their leaders. Christ addressed it more directly to these latter, whom it chiefly concerned; but He did not exclude the multitude,[818] which followed the discussion with keen interest. The accounts in the three Synoptics closely resemble one another in the matter of the substance of the parable; [819] we will point out their chief differences of detail. The parable may be divided into two parts, one of which is historical, the other prophetic. In the former there is first a little setting by way of introduction. "There was a man, a householder, who planted a vineyard, and made a hedge round about it, and dug in it a press, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a strange country, for a long time."

This description is taken from the vine-growing practices of Palestine, such as the prophet Isaias noted in a famous passage,[820] which is sometimes called the "Canticle of the Vine-

[818] St. Matthew: "Hear ye another parable." This invitation is offered to the Sanhedrin's delegates. St. Luke: "He began to speak to the people this parable." The two texts supplement each other.

[819] Matt. 21:33–41; Mark 12:1–9; Luke 20:9–16.

[820] Is. 5:1–7.

yard," and which one might almost say inspired our Lord's words. "In Palestine every vineyard is enclosed by a wall of loose stones. In it is built a tower, also of stone, enabling the owner to watch over his vineyard at the time the grapes appear, for they are much sought after by jackals [821] and by human beings. These towers have a roof of branches, thus providing shelter at night. To-day not every vineyard has a press, but many traces of ancient presses are to be found, and precisely the *hypolenion* or vat beneath the press." [822] In fact, the wine-press of the ancient Jews consisted of two vats, one above the other; in the upper one were heaped the grapes, which the vine-dressers crushed with their feet. Through a hole in the bottom of this vat, the juice flowed into another vat, which was below the level of the ground and was frequently cut out of the solid rock.[823]

These various details, summed up by Isaias and by our Lord, show the owner's great solicitude for his vineyard. But this precious vineyard was Israel, the race so favored by Heaven, and the owner was God Himself. In the Old Testament, no figure recurs more frequently than that of the vineyard, to represent the Jewish theocracy.[824] And so the Savior uses it here, the more appropriately since Palestine formerly was,[825] and is even yet in parts, very suitable for grape culture. When a vineyard, as in the present case, was rented out by the owner, the rent was paid either in cash or in kind. The second part of the parable shows that, in this instance, the latter arrangement was adopted. Since the owner in the par-

[821] Boars also; cfr. Ps. 79: 14.

[822] Lagrange, *L'Évangile selon S. Marc*, p. 285. Ὑπολήνιον, the lower vat, the *lacus vinarius* of the Latins. The Vulgate translation, *torcular*, is not quite correct.

[823] See Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 36, fig. 8.

[824] Cf. Deut. 32: 32; Ps. 79: 9–16; Is. 5: 1–7; 16: 10; 27: 1–11; Jer. 2: 21; Ezech. 15: 1–6; 19: 10; Osee 10: 1, etc.

[825] Gen. 49: 11; Deut. 8: 8; 28: 30, 39, etc.

able stands for God, his going away to a far country is a fiction required by the story. After entrusting His mystical vineyard to rulers whose duty it was to care for it in His name, the God of Israel let them act according to their free will, as He does habitually with mankind.

The continuation of the parable describes at some length the unworthy conduct of the husbandmen:

"And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant to receive of the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. Who having laid hands on him, beat him and sent him away empty. And again he sent to them another servant; and him they wounded in the head, and used him reproachfully. And again he sent another, and him they killed; and many others, of whom some they beat, and others they killed. Therefore having yet one son, most dear to him, he also sent him unto them last of all, saying: They will reverence my son. But the husbandmen said one to another: This is the heir; come let us kill him; and the inheritance shall be ours. And laying hold on him, they killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard."

Everything is clear in these lines, which give an exact summary of many centuries of Jewish religious history, and particularly that of their leaders. Often their kings and priests and, in our Lord's time, their doctors and other ruling classes, showed themselves faithless to their mission and treated with insolent contempt and sometimes with real cruelty the messengers sent by God from time to time to claim His lawful portion of the harvest, that is, to require of them an exact accounting of the guidance they were giving His people. The successive messengers in the parable represent the wonderful series of prophets sent by God to His chosen people and to their temporal and spiritual guides, to remind them of their duties toward Him and to lead them back when they strayed. That is one of the most beautiful pages of the history of the Jewish people. But it is also one of the saddest, as St.

Stephen says,[826] following Jeremias[827] and the Savior: "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" [828] To mention only the best known, there was Elias, insulted by Jezabel, Micheas imprisoned by Achab, Eliseus threatened by Joram, Zacharias stoned by order of Joas, Jeremias stoned by his fellow-Jews in Egypt, Isaias (according to Jewish tradition [829]) cut up with a saw.

The parable shows an ever increasing perfidy on the part of the husbandmen, and a folly akin to madness, since they suppose their murderous assault upon the owner's son—consequently against Christ—would give them full possession of the vineyard. And it shows us long-suffering patience and mercy on God's part, until the dastardly murder of the owner's son calls for a just vengeance. The sending of the messengers and the ill-treatment given them by the husbandmen are not described in the same manner in all three accounts.[830] St. Matthew, whose text we have quoted, divides the servants into two groups, who come one after the other. St. Luke mentions only three messengers. St. Mark at first does likewise; but then he speaks of "many others." These are simple variants of the tradition. There is a gradation in the husbandmen's wicked deeds: at first merely insults, then acts of violence, finally the murder of the messengers, even the slaying of the "one son most dear to him." In this last detail, history gives way to prophecy. Jesus has before His mind's eye the scenes of His Passion, which He recounts as if they had already occurred, so certain is He that His enemies will go to the utmost extremes against Him.

But it is the closing part of the parable that enables us fully to enter into the prophecy, for it depicts with frightful clear-

[826] Acts 7:52.
[827] Jer. 25:3–7.
[828] Matt. 23:37.
[829] Cf. 3 Kings 19:2; 22:24–27; 4 Kings 6:31; 2 Par. 24:21, etc.
[830] The reader will find it interesting to make a detailed comparison.

ness the reprisals of the offended father. "When therefore the lord of the vineyard shall come," our Lord continues, "what will he do to those husbandmen?" According to St. Matthew, Christ put this question directly to those members of the Sanhedrin who were around Him. In all justice they had to say: "He will bring those evil men to an evil end,[831] and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, that shall render him the fruit in due season." The punishment will be twofold. The criminal leaders of Judaism will personally undergo the penalty which they inflicted on the son of the owner of the vineyard, and they will involve their race in their punishment. The soldiers of Titus and also Jewish assassins will be the ones to carry out this sentence. Moreover, the Messianic vineyard will pass to other and more faithful hands, namely, those of the Gentiles, whose future conversion and entrance into the Church of Christ are thus again foretold.

The Savior turned a severe, penetrating look upon His questioners. Then He said:

"Have you never read in the Scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? By the Lord this has been done; and it is wonderful in our eyes. Therefore I say to you, that the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder."

So rapid and varied is the Savior's language, that the figure abruptly changes; but the idea remains quite the same. The husbandmen are now considered as builders who, through a most culpable mistake, fail to use the stone which God destined for a preponderant office in the building constructed by His command. It was to have been a "cornerstone," joining the two principal walls and also serving as their firm base.

[831] A play on words in the Oriental manner.

Nevertheless it will reach its right place. As we see in the passage of the Psalm from which Jesus quoted,[832] and also in the prophecies of Isaias and Daniel,[833] it stands for the Messias, as the indestructible foundation of the Church, and no human power can prevail against it. Here, too, the punishment will closely follow the crime, for this stone which, in the divine plan, was to be an instrument of salvation, will be changed into an instrument of ruin for the enemies of Christ, whether they hurl themselves violently against it or whether it falls upon them with all its crushing weight. To this threat of punishment for the guilty Jews, there is added the promise, so glorious for the pagans. This metaphor of the cornerstone vividly impressed the Apostles, and they several times apply it to our Lord.[834]

The three Evangelists mention the impression which these last words produced upon the Sanhedrin's delegates.[835] The latter understood that the words designated them and condemned them and their exasperation became unbounded. Again they considered seizing Christ immediately and carrying out the death decree which they had decided upon some time before; but once more fear restrained them. By imprudently resorting to violence they would run the risk of drawing down upon themselves the anger of the multitudes, who showed a deeper and deeper attachment to Jesus and considered Him as a great prophet. They withdrew, therefore, in confusion, without having learned what they wished to know, and on the contrary, after learning what they would have preferred not to know.

Jesus unquestionably remained master of the situation.

[832] Ps. 117:21–23.
[833] Is. 8:14 f.; Dan. 2:34 f.
[834] Acts 4:11; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:2.
[835] Matt. 21:45 f.; Mark 12:12; Luke 20:19.

After a short pause,[836] He spoke a third parable, supplementing that of the wicked husbandmen. In the latter parable, God was represented as a land-owner demanding what is due him from unscrupulous debtors. In the present parable He appears in the figure of a kind, generous king inviting his subjects to his table and giving them valuable presents. In both cases the divine patience and goodness is accompanied by a serious threat. In this third parable, as in the two preceding ones, our Lord plainly foretells the ruin of the Jewish State and the punishment of its unworthy leaders. It is usually spoken of as the parable of the Marriage Feast.[837] In substance and in many details, it closely resembles that of the Great Supper, which we quoted from the Third Gospel.[838] Many commentators [839] regard the two accounts as being one and the same parable. But they fail to note that the accounts are connected with quite different periods and occasions. In the present case, for example, Christ is in one of the Temple courts speaking especially to members of the Sanhedrin; in the other case, He was at table in a Pharisee's house. Furthermore, several details are entirely different in the two accounts; and even when they are similar, they are presented in a new form. In fine, the Savior's purpose was not exactly the same in the two cases. The comparison of the Kingdom of God to a great supper was then very popular, so that our Lord might have used it on different occasions to teach the people, each time introducing some slight changes.

This same figure recurs often in the rabbinical writings, especially in a certain Talmudic parable by Rabbi Jochanan

[836] This pause is indicated in St. Matthew's account by a little introductory formula: "Jesus answering, spoke again in parables to them, saying . . ." The plural ἐν παραβολαῖς includes the two preceding parables.

[837] Matt. 22: 1–14.

[838] Luke 14: 16–24.

[839] Among them, Maldonatus.

ben Zaccai, who lived in the latter part of the first century of the Christian era.[840] The parable is as follows: "A king invited his servants to a supper, but without stating the exact time when it would take place. Those servants who were wise put on their ceremonial robes, and sat down at the door of the king's house. They said: Perhaps something is still needed in the king's house.[841] Those who were without wisdom went to their work. They said: Was a supper ever prepared without work?[842] Of a sudden the king has his servants called. Those who were wise entered, vested in their ceremonial robes. But those who were without wisdom entered without being properly clothed for the occasion. Then the king showed his gratification to the wise, but was angered against the others. He said: These who have put on their ceremonial clothes for the supper, may enter and eat and drink; but those who have not dressed for the feast, shall remain standing and look on."[843]

The ceremonial robes are the same as the wedding garment which is referred to in the last lines of the parable of the Marriage Feast. This parable is made up of three parts, each of which corresponds to a new idea. It begins as follows:

"The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a king, who made a marriage for his son. And he sent his servants to call them that were invited to the marriage; and they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying: Tell them that were invited, Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my beeves and fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come ye to the marriage. But they neglected, and went their ways, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise. And the rest laid hands on his servants, and having treated them con-

[840] Cf. Strack, *Einleitung in den Talmud*, 2d ed., p. 78.

[841] But, in any event, we shall not have long to wait; let us hold ourselves ready.

[842] Consequently, there is no need of hurry; we have plenty of time to go to the palace.

[843] Fiebig, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu in Lichte der rabbinischen Gleichnisse*, p. 18.

tumeliously, put them to death. But when the king had heard of it, he was angry, and sending his armies, he destroyed those murderers, and burnt their city."

The king in the parable represents God the Father, the sovereign Master of Heaven and earth, and more especially the supreme ruler of the Jewish theocracy. His Son is Christ, contracting with the Church a close, indissoluble union, which the New Testament writings, beginning with the Gospels, often represent as a mystical marriage.[844] When explaining the parable of the Great Supper, we said that among Orientals, those friends of formalism and ceremony, the host nearly always sends repeated invitations to his guests. In that part of the present parable which we have just quoted there are three such invitations. The invited guests are at first simply obstinate; but presently they become rebellious and murderous, in both cases being gravely guilty, as the mere fact of their refusal was an insult to the king. Since they belonged to the ruling classes of the kingdom, they symbolize the hierarchs, the members of the Great Council, the Scribes and Pharisees, in a word, all the civil and religious leaders of the Jewish nation. They too had criminally and insolently refused the priceless invitation which their divine King extended to them to come to the marriage of His Son (Christ). They remained deaf to the successive messages which God sent them by Christ and His disciples, and which He intended to send them by the Apostles and other preachers of the Gospel. Just as the Gospel narrative brings us to our Lord's Passion, of which the Jewish religious chiefs were the principal cause, so the Acts of the Apostles shows us the Apostles and disciples of the Messias forcibly seized as malefactors, shamefully mistreated, and cruelly put to death.[845] But in due time

[844] Matt. 9:15; John 3:29; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:32; Apoc. 19:7, etc.
[845] Acts 4:3; 5:18, 40; 7:58; 8:3; 12:3; 14:5–19; 16:23; 17:5; 21:30; 23:2.

comes the punishment of the persecutors, and the Romans become the instrument of divine retribution. Many of those who heard our Lord's threatening words may have been crushed or burned alive under the smoking ruins of the Temple, where that prophecy was uttered.

Although so grievously offended by those whom he had honored by inviting them first, the king did not forego his plan of a worthy celebration of his son's marriage. As everything was ready for the feast, nothing remained to be done but to find some new guests. How this was done, is described in the second part of the parable.

"Then he saith to his servants: The marriage indeed is ready; but they that were invited were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways; and as many as you shall find, call to the marriage. And his servants going forth into the ways, gathered together all that they found, both bad and good. And the marriage was filled with guests."

Our parable again parallels that recorded by St. Luke. But in this case the invitation is general, and the king's messengers, following his orders, bring in guests of all sorts, "bad and good," without concerning themselves about their actual condition. The bad will have an excellent opportunity to be converted and to become good. The invitation makes no distinction between Jews and Gentiles: these categories cease to exist in the Church of the Messias, one of its essential marks being the catholicity of its membership. Therefore Jesus later on, before ascending into Heaven, says to His Apostles: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations." [846] The gospel net will be cast into the vast sea of the world, gathering fishes of all kinds.

The third part of the parable tells us that, when all the

[846] Matt. 28: 19.

guests had taken their places on the couches arranged about the tables,

"the king went in to see the guests; and he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment. And he saith to him: Friend, how camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment? But he was silent. Then the king said to the waiters: Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness; there shall be weep- and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen."

It was not for the purpose of dining with his guests that the king entered the banquet hall. After the manner of great personages inviting a considerable number of their vassals, he came to greet them and to see whether everything was fitting. Suddenly he perceived that one of the guests had violated an elementary rule of etiquette: he had come to the palace and was present at the banquet, dressed in ordinary clothes, like the "unwise" persons of the Talmudic parable, without wearing the "wedding garment," that is, the formal dress proper for such a feast celebrated in such a place. True, the last invitation was a hurried one which had found the people on the highways and in the market place, consequently dressed in garments that were by no means elegant. But in the East there is a special custom which made the conduct of the guest in question unpardonable. When a distinguished person issues invitations to a formal meal, he provides each guest with a ceremonial garment to be worn at the banquet. Even though a man were of the poorest, he would have no excuse to offer if he took the liberty of appearing at the feast unsuitably dressed. Hence the king's anger, which is expressed in a severe reproach and by the prompt expulsion of the offender who was guilty of such lack of respect.

We will not here enter into a discussion of the ancient writers as to the exact meaning of the wedding garment,[847]

[847] See Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Matthieu*, p. 424.

but will simply say that it represents, in a general way, the holiness which they should possess who have been given the great honor of being admitted as citizens of the Messianic kingdom, *i. e.,* as members of the Church of Christ. As the parable tells us, they may be wicked when they receive the divine call; but they should quickly abandon that sinful condition and clothe themselves in virtue and holiness. The Jews are rejected because of their unbelief, and the Gentiles are called to take their place; but they, too, will be rejected if they show themselves unworthy. Such is the significance of this important lesson taught by our Lord.

We have witnessed the first phase of the struggle between the Savior and His enemies. The delegates of the Sanhedrin were silenced. But upon withdrawing from the scene, they hatched a veritable plot against Jesus: as St. Mark and St. Luke tell us,[848] the Sanhedrists promptly sent their friends the Pharisees to Him, directing them to continue the discussion. The Pharisees willingly accepted the undertaking, in the hope of being more successful.[849] They held a brief consultation to work out a plan of attack. It was their desire to lead our Lord into some compromising utterance, for which they could accuse Him, either before the Roman authorities or before His own nation. Therefore they made their attempt in the field of political questions, at that time so dangerous. Their malicious purpose is dramatically indicated by the figurative expressions used by the Evangelists. They wish to catch Him in a snare, as it were, to pursue Him, to surprise Him.[850] Not with honorable weapons do they combat Him, but with unworthy trickery.

[848] Mark 12:13; St. Luke (20:20) throws their malice into bold relief: "Being upon the watch, they sent spies, who should feign themselves just, that they might take hold of Him in His words."

[849] Matt. 22:15–22; Mark 12:13–17; Luke 20:20–26.

[850] Παγιδεύσωσιν (St. Matthew); ἀγρεύσωσιν (St. Mark); ἐπιλάβωνται (St. Luke).

Thus, at first, they do not themselves come before Him, fearing to arouse His well-grounded distrust. They send some of their young *talmidim* (disciples), who come with seeming candor to submit a case of conscience which they think He will solve in such a way as to create serious embarrassment for Himself. Several Herodians, so called because they were avowed partisans of the dynasty of the Herods, join the Pharisees' emissaries. Being devoted to the government of Rome, they would become accusers and witnesses in case the Savior's reply should be contrary to the interests of the Empire.

A number of students of the rabbinical schools, therefore, came to our Lord, with all outward signs of deepest respect. By way of flattering preamble, intended to conceal the insidious nature of their move and to disarm suspicion, they said: "Master, we know that Thou art a true speaker, and teachest the way of God in truth; neither carest Thou for any man; for Thou dost not regard the person of men." What an accumulation of hypocritical praise, although it was, in fact, so well deserved by the Savior! These disciples were worthy of their masters. They affectedly referred to Christ's perfect orthodoxy,[851] His well-known independence of human respect, His impartiality. Thus they declared their unbounded confidence in Him and seemed to accept beforehand His decision upon the problem they were about to submit. An early commentator [852] compares them to bees, whose mouth is full of honey, but whose body carries a sharp sting.

They state their "casus" in clear terms: "Tell us what dost Thou think. Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or is it forbidden? Shall we pay it, or shall we not pay it?" [853] Their query contains two distinct questions. The first is gen-

[851] "The way of God," which He teaches in all truth, is the ensemble of the divine commandments, which form the path of virtue.

[852] Pseudo-Jerome, quoted in *Catena D. Thomae in Evang. Matthaei, h. l.*

[853] We cite these words according to the Greek text of St. Mark.

eral and theoretical. Is it, yes or no, allowable to pay tribute to the Roman Emperor? The second question is practical and specific: Shall we, the members of the Jewish nation, pay this tax?[854] We have already[855] mentioned how heavily the Roman domination weighed upon the Jews. The tax they were obliged to pay regularly to the detested publicans, who collected it in the name of the reigning Caesar, was particularly hateful to them because, quite aside from its often crushing burden, it was a palpable sign of their subjection. It is true that the problem thus presented would have embarrassed neither the holy King Ezechias nor the prophet Jeremias, nor persons so proud of their national independence as Esdras and Nehemias; without ceasing to be true Israelites, they did not hesitate to recognize the suzerainty of Nineveh, Babylon, or Persia. But the narrow principles and the pride of the Pharisees had aroused in many souls anxious doubts, which were taken as a basis for the present insidious case of conscience.

We must not forget that the Romans were excessively jealous of the right which they assumed, after each of their conquests, to impose various kinds of tribute upon the vanquished nations. To refuse to pay the tax to Caesar would have been to commit a crime of *lèse majesté* and to invite terrible reprisals. Those Jews who followed Judas the Gaulonite in revolt, shortly after the birth of Christ,[856] learned this to their cost, for that refusal had been the cause of their rebellion. The Pharisees, although opposed in principle to the payment of the tax and very hostile to Rome, were as careful as others to pay it.

[854] According to the most authentic reading of the Greek texts, each of the Evangelists uses a different word to designate the tribute. St. Matthew, κῆνσον (Vulg., *censum*); St. Mark, ἐπικεφάλαιον (Vulg., *tributum*); St. Luke, φόρον (Vulg., *tributum*). Probably the reference is to the *tributum capitis*, or poll tax, as opposed to the other kinds of taxes.

[855] Volume I, pp. 153 ff.

[856] Acts 5:37; Josephus, *Ant.*, XVIII, i, 6.

With these details in mind, we can readily understand the nature of the trap intended for our Lord. If He should reply in the negative, they would "deliver Him up to the authority and power of the governor," as St. Luke explains. If He answered in the affirmative, they would denounce Him to the people as an avowed enemy of the most sacred rights of the theocracy. It seems that the first of the two replies had been expected. The trap was certainly a clever one; but it was thwarted still more cleverly. Before giving a solution to the problem, Jesus wished to show the questioners that He was not at all deceived by their hypocritical maneuver and that He was aware of their evil intent.[857] He said to them: "Why do you tempt Me? Show Me the coin of the tribute." [858] What keen though silent emotion must have been felt by those present, while someone went off to get the coin! After a silver *denarius* [859] was handed to Him, Jesus looked at it and said: "Whose image and inscription is this?" The young Pharisees answered: "Caesar's." The reigning Caesar at that time was Tiberius. His features, which were graven on the *denarius,* are well known to antiquarians and numismatists. It would be hard to find a more beautiful face; but among the many effigies of Roman Emperors left us by antiquity, there is scarcely any with features so cruel as those of Tiberius. On the face of the coin now at our hand, we read this exergue: TI(berius) CAESAR DIVI AUG(usti) F(ilius) AUG(ustus) PONT(ifex) MAX(imus).[860]

Taking the Pharisees' reply for His starting-point, the Divine Master gave one of His most profound decisions, a saying pregnant with happy consequences, when followed in

[857] This fact is noted by all three Evangelists.

[858] St. Matthew: *τὸ νόμισμα τοῦ κήνσου* (Vulg., *numisma census*). St. Mark and St. Luke: *δηνάριον* (Vulg., *denarium*). Probably our Lord used the general expression cited in the First Gospel. It is more appropriate to the situation.

[859] Equal to about sixteen cents in our money.

[860] See Madden, *History of Jewish Coinage,* pp. 245–248.

practice: "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God, the things that are God's." The tempters had asked whether it was lawful, whether it was permissible to "give" the tribute. Our Lord answers that it is a duty for them to "render" [861] it, that is, to pay it as something due. He enunciated a fine principle, which most harmoniously regulates the Christian's relation with God and with the State, while safeguarding the rights of each. According to what the Jewish Zealots and a number of Pharisees said, there would be an incompatibility between payment of the tax and the sovereignty which God exercised over the Chosen People. Christ declares that this incompatibility does not exist; His object lesson is very forceful. That *denarius* came from Rome and belonged to Rome. By its very presence in Palestine it testified to Rome's domination: let it therefore return to Rome in the form of tribute! But it is no less just to render to God what belongs to Him, for, above the authorities of the earth there is the divine authority, to which we owe respect, obedience, and love. God and the State, religion and politics, are assuredly two distinct spheres, one of which greatly surpasses the other, but they are not opposed to each other and can peacefully coexist to procure the happiness of mankind. In the attainment of that end there is evidently no need for the State to exceed its rights; on the contrary, it should always respect the rights of religion and conscience, it should ally itself with God, with the Church of Christ, to prevent evil, to aid in spreading the truth, in procuring the material and intellectual, and above all the moral well-being of nations. Such are the consequences of Christ's golden saying.

So ably and clearly did the Savior answer the question that the worst enemies of Rome and the most rabid Zealots could

[861] Δοῦναι, ἀπόδοτε. The two expressions are correlative.

not take offense. St. Paul [862] later develops this same thought. The questioners withdrew in silence, greatly chagrined, and at the same time forced to admire [863] the wisdom of Him whom they had endeavored to ensnare.

On that "day of questions," as Bossuet calls it, all the most influential parties of the Jewish nation—members of the Sanhedrin, Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees—came one after the other and asked our Lord insidious questions. It is now the Sadducees' turn. Only once so far [864] have we seen them in the Savior's presence, when they insolently asked Him to give them "a sign from heaven." These men of liberal ideas, mostly members of the upper clergy and almost indifferent to the Roman yoke, seemed hardly to be concerned with the Savior's growing reputation and authority during His public life. They had not the same reason as the Pharisees for dreading His teaching. As we would say to-day, they were half-Rationalists and were very little disturbed over the traditions to which their rivals attached such great importance, and the foundations of which were often undermined by our Lord. But the events of these last days revealed to them in the Temple, in their own special domain, the preponderant power of Christ. Considering Him a dangerous competitor, they planned to rid themselves of Him as quickly as possible. They introduce a discussion in the field of dogma; but their choice weapon is ridicule, which sometimes enables one to deal most telling blows to an opponent, especially in the presence of the populace, who are fond of this sort of strife.[865]

As the Synoptics tell us in the present instance, and as we know from other sources, notably Josephus and the Talmud,[866] the Sadducees did not bother much about the sacred

[862] Rom. 13:1–7.
[863] St. Mark strengthens the idea by the use of a compound verb, *ἐξεθαύμαζον*.
[864] Matt. 16:1.
[865] Matt. 22:22–33; Mark 12:18–27; Luke 20:27–40.
[866] Josephus, *Ant.*, XVIII, i, 3 f.; Meuschen, *Novum Testamentum ex Tal-*

dogmas of Judaism. They denied both the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body. The difficulty which they prepare to submit to our Lord refers to this latter point. Disdaining any flattering preamble, after calling the Savior "Master," they straightway say to Him: "Moses wrote unto us: If a man die having no son, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up issue to his brother." The law referred to was worded as follows:[867] "When brethren dwell together, and one of them dieth without children, the wife of the deceased shall not marry to another;[868] but his brother shall take her and raise up seed for his brother. And the first son he shall have of her he shall call by his name, that his name be not abolished out of Israel." We see from this text that the Sadducees quoted its sense correctly.

This prescription, which however was not special to the Jews, being found among other peoples of antiquity, such as the Egyptians, Persians, and Hindus, and to-day among the Circassians, is known as the law of the Levirate,[869] that is, a law regulating marriage between brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. Its purpose was to maintain the elder branch of each family and to prevent a too great alienation of property. It was not confined to the brother of a husband dying without children; it extended to other near relations, as we learn from the book of Ruth.[870] It was not strictly obligatory; yet anybody who refused to submit to it had to undergo a humiliating ceremony.[871] Although it fell into discredit, which increased with time, it had not ceased to be in vigor in Palestine.

mude Illustratum, pp. 107–110; Wünsche, *Neue Beiträge zur Erläuterung der Evangelien,* pp. 258–263; Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums,* pp. 135, 175, etc.

867 Deut. 25:5 f.

868 That is, anyone outside the family.

869 From the Latin *levir,* brother-in-law.

870 Ruth 3:9:13.

871 Deut. 25:7–10; Ruth 4:1–11.

After brief mention of the legal text, the Sadducees cite a case, probably imaginary, though *in se* possible,[872] which they set forth in such a way as to ridicule belief in the resurrection of the dead. They said:

"Now there were seven brethren; and the first took a wife, and died leaving no issue. And the second took her, and died; and neither did he leave any issue. And the third in like manner. And the seven all took her in like manner; and did not leave issue. Last of all the woman also died. In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise again, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife."

This little narrative is a model of delicate casuistry. Its authors thought that the closing question would place Christ in the utmost embarrassment. How would He be able to answer this *deductio ad absurdum?* Did it not seemingly deal a fatal blow to the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, by showing that that doctrine raised insurmountable difficulties? Even had there been only two marriages, the same question would arise;[873] but by excessively increasing the number of the marriages, the Sadducees made the objection more serious.

Yet with what ease the Divine Master solves it! His reply is marked by wisdom and calm dignity. To these proud members of the hierarchy He sets forth the truth in the very sphere of their own domain. "You err," He began, "not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." This was a severe reproach, especially when addressed to the spiritual leaders of Judaism. The difficulty which they considered insurmountable was merely the result of a serious error on their part, and that error was caused by an equally serious ignorance. Our Lord proceeds to prove the twofold ignorance of His questioners.

[872] Cf. Tob. 6:14.

[873] The question had, in fact, been discussed by various rabbis, and their solution was that, in such a case, the woman would, in the next world, belong to the first of the two husbands. *Sohar Gen.*, XXIV, 96.

"The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage;[874] for when they shall rise again from the dead, they shall neither be married nor take wives. Neither can they die any more; for they are equal to the angels." The Sadducees pretended that in the next life conditions of existence would be the same as in this world, especially from the standpoint of marriage, as though it were impossible for God to alter these conditions. Therein they were greatly mistaken. Is not God all-powerful, and after having formed human nature, is He not able to transform it at His pleasure? In the present life, marriage is necessary to fill the gaps which death constantly creates in the ranks of mankind. In Heaven, where no one dies, there will be no need of marriage or of generation.[875] Those who rise from the dead and become immortal will, in this respect, be like the angels. Hence the Sadducees' groundless objection utterly collapsed. It is true that they denied the existence of angels, as well as the resurrection of the dead;[876] but Jesus had no fear of this denial, and was ready to argue with His adversaries about this other article of Judaic theology.

Passing to the second cause of the Sadducees' error, namely, their ignorance of the Scriptures, He said: "As concerning the dead that they rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush[877] God spoke to him, saying: I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living." As

[874] This second phrase refers to the women, who, in Oriental countries, have a merely passive part in arranging and deciding the question of marriage. Their parents choose or accept their future husbands for them.

[875] The Talmud (*Berashoth*, 17) contains a similar statement: "In the future world no one will eat or drink, or increase by marriage; there will be no buying or selling . . . ; but the just are seated, with crowns upon their heads, and they enjoy the splendor of the divinity."

[876] Acts 23:8.

[877] Ex. 3:6; this is the passage containing the episode of the burning bush.

many have observed, following St. Jerome,[878] what the Savior's reasoning directly proves is not the future resurrection of the dead, but the immortality of the soul. Yet, especially in Jewish thought, these two doctrines were inseparable. The body being considered an essential part of human nature, the resurrection of the body follows from the immortality of the soul. Since the Bible proclaims the existence of an external life, it must be for man entire, such as he came forth from the Creator's hands and such as he lives upon earth. Without the resurrection of the body man would be incomplete. Hence some day he will be reëstablished in his primitive state, and the body will reunite with the soul, never more to be separated from it.

Our Lord might have cited more striking texts in behalf of His thesis.[879] But the Sadducees had appealed to Moses, and it was by a passage from the writings of Moses that Christ refuted them.[880] In several times calling Himself the God of Abraham, after the death of that patriarch,[881] and in calling Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob long after the death of those great men,[882] God certainly wished to express a profound idea. That idea is that He does not after death abandon those who have served Him faithfully during their life and whom He has tenderly loved, as in the case of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. From this close union of the just with God, the Psalmist [883] deduces a confident assurance of immortality.

[878] *Comment. in Matth.*, 22:31 f.

[879] *V. g.*, Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2.

[880] In early times this choice by the Savior was often explained by saying that the Sadducees accepted only the Pentateuch as a canonical part of the Bible. Cf. Origen, *Contra Cels.*, I, 49; *Comment. in Matth.*, 22:35 f.; St. Jerome, *loc. cit.*, etc. But the fact is not altogether proven. See Schürer, *Geschichte des jüd. Volkes*, 3d ed., II, 311–412.

[881] Gen. 26:24; 28:13.

[882] Ex. 3:6, 15, 16; 4:5.

[883] Ps. 15:8–11; 48:15 f.; 72:25–28.

Would the God of Israel, wishing to take a glorious name, have called Himself the God of a few bones that had been reduced to dust centuries before? Christ said to His adversaries: "You therefore do greatly err." His argument was so conclusive that the Sadducees could find no answer to give: it put a gag, so to speak, upon their mouth, as St. Matthew says. The crowds that were gathered about our Lord at the discussion, were filled with admiration and enthusiasm.[884] Christ's enemies had determined to ruin His prestige with the people. But the very opposite had occurred; it was they who were confounded.

The Savior's victory evoked unexpected public felicitations from some of the Scribes present,[885] who said: "Master, Thou hast said well." The praise was the more surprising since, as several episodes have shown, the Scribes generally were altogether hostile to Christ. Truth, however, sometimes overcomes prejudice and hatred. Besides, on many points, the religious ideas of the Scribes were diametrically opposed to those of the Sadducees. Hence these Scribes, who had witnessed their rivals' defeat, could not hide the gratification they felt. Their praise of our Lord's victorious reasoning was, therefore, all the more earnest.

In the matter of the incident that followed the Sadducees' attack, we must first reconcile a little divergence in the two accounts of it.[886] In St. Matthew's Gospel we read: "The Pharisees hearing that He had silenced the Sadducees, came together; and one of them, a doctor of the Law, asked Him, tempting Him: Master, which is the great commandment in the Law?" St. Mark's Gospel says: "There came one of the Scribes that had heard them reasoning together, and seeing

[884] Ἐξεπλήσσοντο; this is St. Matthew's forcible expression.

[885] Luke 20: 39.

[886] Matt. 22: 34–40; Mark 12: 28–34. St. Mark is by far the more complete. St. Luke makes no mention of the incident, because he has already related (10: 25–28) one of the same sort.

that He had answered them well, asked Him which was the first commandment of all." According to the Second Gospel, not only does this Scribe appear to be prompted by no evil intent when questioning our Lord, but the context shows him in a very favorable light. Yet the divergence of the two historians is only apparent. They are easily reconciled by a quite natural hypothesis, namely, that they envisage the same fact from two different points of view. What especially impressed St. Matthew was the motive which brought the Scribe to Christ. In fact, this Scribe, as a champion of the Pharisees, came for the purpose of trapping our Lord. But he did not wholly share their wicked dispositions towards Him, nor all their narrow religious ideas. Therefore, impressed by the Savior's words of wisdom, he at once became better disposed toward Him. It is this commendable aspect—the Scribe's fairness and the honesty with which he acknowledged the truth—that is brought out in St. Mark's account. We might add that the First Gospel gives us only a summary of the facts.

"Which is the first of all the commandments?" was the Scribe's question, according to the usual translation.[887] But the word "which" does not quite exactly render the sense of the Greek adjective used in this place; it means rather: "of what sort?" [888] Consequently: What qualities should a commandment of the Mosaic Law possess, what conditions should it fulfil, to deserve being placed in the first rank? This question, which to us appears quite innocent, was then looked upon as very complicated and hence was a subject of endless discussion in the rabbinical schools. In fact, according to the view of the rabbis, the Jewish Law contained as many as 613 precepts. In the face of so great a number of commandments, it

[887] According to St. Matthew: Which commandment "is great in the law"? Literally, according to St. Mark: "Which is the commandment the first of all things?"

[888] Ποία: therefore, *quale,* rather than the *quod* of the Vulgate.

was natural to wonder which were the most important, the greatest, the most obligatory. Rabbi Simlai said: "If Moses prescribed 365 negative and 248 positive laws for us, assuredly all these precepts could not be equally important, nor could all the violations of them be equally sinful. Which, then, are the important commandments, and which are the less urgent laws?" [889] As they were unable to agree and as they became lost in the maze of these "heavy" and "light" precepts, as they called them, the doctors ended by deciding that the divine Lawgiver had not marked His commandments from the standpoint of their importance, so that thereby we should be moved to neglect none of them.[890] And now there comes someone who wishes to embarrass the Divine Master by asking Him this question. His answer is spontaneous and true; it opens a wonderful vista to His hearers. He says: "The first commandment of all is: Hear, O Israel: the Lord thy God is one God, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength."

In these lines, which we quote according to St. Mark, the reader will notice the little introduction, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord thy God is one God." These words are famous in the Jewish world, where, perhaps for two thousand years past,[891] they have become the popular and condensed formula of belief in one God and in all which this unity presupposes. They are called the *Shema,* from their first word in Hebrew. Every faithful Jew must recite them at least twice a day, at his morning and night prayers. *Shema Israel* is an exclamation, a sort of ejaculatory prayer, often on the lips of pious persons.[892]

[889] Tractate *Makkoth,* 24 a. It was noted that the former number was that of the days in a year, while the latter number was the number of members in the human body. (See Wünsche, *Neue Beiträge,* p. 267.)

[890] *Debarim Rabba,* VI, on the text of Deut. 22:6.

[891] Josephus alludes to it, *Ant.,* IV, viii, 13.

[892] The *Shema* is made up of three passages from the Pentateuch: Deut. 6:4–9;

After this opening phrase comes the text of the great commandment of love,[893] which is quoted with slight variants in the Hebrew text, in the Septuagint translation, and in the First and Second Gospels. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength," says the Hebrew text. The Septuagint translates the passage thus: "Thou shalt love . . . with thy whole mind, with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength." In St. Matthew's Gospel we read: "With thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind." St. Mark has: "With thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength." These are mere shades of difference, representing all the faculties and powers of man. Everything in us, therefore, should love God: the heart, since it is preëminently the organ of love; the soul and mind, that is, the intellectual faculties; and also the strength, the entirety of our powers of every sort. As St. Bernard so beautifully says, "the measure in which to love God is to love Him without measure." Christ thus gives this text from Deuteronomy a new vitality and an extension that it could not have had under the Old Covenant.[894]

Although the Scribe's question referred only to one of the divine commandments, Christ supplemented His reply by adding: "This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Here the Divine Master quoted another passage from

11:13–21; Num. 15:37–41. See Blau, *Origine et Histoire de la Lecture du Shema . . .*, in the *Revue des Études Juives,* Vol. 31 (1895), pp. 179–201; Schürer, *Geschichte des jüd. Volkes,* 3d ed., II, p. 459.

[893] Deut. 6:5.

[894] In that same book, Moses frequently speaks of the necessity for every true Israelite to introduce the love of God in all his acts and to make it the motive of all his conduct. Cf. Deut. 10:12; 11:1, 13, 22; 13:3; 19:9; 30:6, 16, 20. It is the first and most essential of religious duties. But later Judaism had been forgetful of that admonition.

the Pentateuch,[895] but He greatly broadened it. In the book of Leviticus, the words "thy neighbor," according to the context, seem to refer only to members of the Jewish nation, whereas here, as we know from the explanation given by the Savior,[896] they mean all men, including foreigners, nay even enemies. Jesus could not comprehend a love for God without love of neighbor, and thenceforth he would not permit the two to be separated. The precept of love of God far excels all others. But from it, as from its source, springs fraternal charity. And our Lord stresses the fact that the precepts commanding the practice of this double love are like each other and inseparable from each other. In themselves they sum up the whole Law, all the teaching of the prophets, especially that of the Decalogue. St. Paul, therefore, has a right to say that "love is the fulfilling of the Law," [897] that is, its perfect and integral accomplishment.

With a few exceptions,[898] the Scribes and Pharisees, being cold-hearted and narrow-minded, hardly grasped this great thought. And so the Scribe who had questioned our Lord could not help publicly showing his enthusiasm. He speaks again, repeating the Savior's words with a few additions: "Well, Master, Thou hast said in truth, that there is one God, and there is no other besides Him. And that He should be loved with the whole heart, and with the whole understanding, and with the whole soul, and with the whole strength, and to love one's neighbor as one's self is a greater thing than all holocausts and sacrifices." The last thought is both beautiful and true. It does honor to him who so frankly expressed it, following many holy personages of the Old Testament.[899] He

[895] Lev. 19:18.
[896] Luke 10:29–37.
[897] Rom. 13:10.
[898] Cf. Luke 10:27.
[899] See 1 Kings 15:22; Ps. 39:7–9; Prov. 21:3; Is. 1:11; Osee 6:6; and especially Ps. 49, which is a magnificent development of this idea.

comprehended the superiority of the law of love over either bloody or unbloody sacrifices, the superiority of the interior worship which we pay to God in loving Him above all things and in loving our brethren out of love for Him, above merely external worship. The Scribe who had spoken so well was at once rewarded, for the Savior said to him, with the greatest kindness: "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." In fact, he had expressed, in most happy language, one of the basic principles of that Kingdom. He stood upon the threshold, and a single step would bring him into the Kingdom. Therefore the Savior gave him this encouragement, urging him to take the necessary step, which consisted in seeking the Messias and acknowledging Him. We like to think that sooner or later he adopted the Christian faith.

At this point the three Evangelists insert a remarkable reflection about the victories which our Lord won in succession on that "day of conflicts" over all who ventured to enter into strife with Him. The sacred writers say that "no man after that durst ask Him any questions." [900] Such was the final result of these repeated discussions. One group after another, the members of the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees, the Herodians, the Sadducees, and the Scribes, had succumbed to the severe blows and wise repartees of Christ's argumentation. At length they understood that each new attack, however clever and well-devised, merely furnished new proofs of His superiority and increased His influence with the people. They had been worsted four times in succession: in the matter of the source of His authority, on the questions of the tribute, the resurrection of the dead, and the chief commandment. They deemed it well to give up the contest, and thenceforth thought only of some easier means of conquering Him by recourse to violence.

He adds to their defeat by putting a question to them which

[900] Matt. 22:46; Mark 12:34; Luke 20:40.

they are unable to answer.[901] It is a lofty question, for it involves an important religious problem: the superior origin of the Messias. St. Matthew says that it was addressed especially to those Pharisees who were still present among the listeners. According to St. Mark, Christ's purpose in asking the question was to give a "teaching" to those about Him. In these same porticoes of the Temple He had on other occasions spoken upon this important subject. In the present instance, while not treating the question fully, he did lift the veil somewhat, by suddenly asking: "What think you of Christ: whose son is He?" The answer to the latter part of His question did not present any difficulty. "David's," answered the Pharisees thus questioned. The ancient prophecies had so often and so plainly spoken on this point,[902] that any Jewish child could have given a satisfactory reply. We have already remarked that the title "Son of David" was the Messias' most popular title. Jesus asked: "How then doth David call Him Lord, saying by the Holy Ghost: [903] The Lord said to my Lord: Sit on My right hand till I make thy enemies thy footstool?"

In this famous text [904] our readers will recognize the first words of the Psalm *Dixit Dominus,*[905] which at that time the entire Jewish world attributed to David and unanimously applied to the Messias, as may be seen from many passages in the New Testament [906] and in the rabbinical writ-

[901] Matt. 22:41–46; Mark 12:35–37; Luke 20:41–44. St. Matthew is the most complete.

[902] See *infra* Appendix VII, and Volume I, pp. 310 ff.

[903] That is, by supernatural inspiration. This detail is important, because it attributes to David's words the character of an infallible truth.

[904] The Evangelists quote it from the Septuagint, with this slight difference, that, in several manuscripts of the Second Gospel, we read ὑποκάτω, "beneath," in place of ὑποπόδιον, "footstool."

[905] Ps. 109 (Heb. 110):1.

[906] Acts 2:34 f.; 1 Cor. 15:25; Heb. 1:13; 5:6; 7:17–21; 10:13, etc. Later, as St. Jerome says (*Comment. in Matth., h. l.*), the Jews sought to avoid the embarrassment which this text gave them, by no longer applying it to David. They held that it was to Abraham that God said: "Sit on My right hand." St. Justin,

ings.[907] In the Hebrew text two different substantives correspond to the word "Lord." The literal translation would be: "Oracle of Jehovah to my Adon" [*i. e.*, to my "Lord"]. The whole proof rests on this title. It necessarily designates a higher being, since so powerful a king as David thought it ought to be given to the person whose greatness he sings in this Psalm. The succeeding part of the canticle shows that the royal poet could have had in mind only a truly divine hero, who is forever enthroned at the right hand of God, and who exercises a superhuman power in the name of God and with God, in other words, who possesses divine nature as also human nature. The Messias is, therefore, Son of David by His temporal generation, and Son of God by His eternal generation. That is the key of the problem; and David bows in advance before the Messias and calls Him his Lord, although He is to be his son according to the flesh, because, by virtue of a supernatural illumination, David knew that Jesus would fully participate in the divinity.

The Pharisees were unable to find this key, although many other Old Testament passages [908] could have given it to them. But, concerning the Messias, their attention, as also that of the mass of the people, centered too much upon the fact of his Davidic descent, and his reign understood in an exclusively national sense. For this reason they forgot or neglected the texts mentioning His heavenly origin.[909] So, despite the subtlety of their Scriptural dialectic, they had to confess their ignorance by maintaining a humiliating silence. After the important events of those last few days, none of them, and none of Jesus' hearers, could have failed to realize that, in raising

Dial. cum Tryph., 33 f. and Tertullian, *Contra Marcion.*, V, 9, much earlier pointed out a Jewish subterfuge of the same sort, which maintained that in this passage the word "Lord" referred to King Ezechias.

[907] Cf. Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 405, 717.

[908] *E. g.*, Ps. 2, Is. 9, Dan. 3.

[909] Lagrange, *L'Évangile de S. Marc*, p. 303.

this question, He meant to apply Psalm 109 to Himself and, in this other form, to declare that He was the Messias described by David. St. Mark closes his account of this episode with the remark that "a great multitude heard Him gladly." Throughout the conflict the crowd had remained close to Him, following the discussions with keenest interest, rejoicing in His repeated victories, and constantly charmed by His words. As the servants of the Sanhedrin had said, never did man speak as He spoke.[910]

III. Tuesday of Holy Week (continued): Denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees; Certain Greeks Come to Christ

The circumstances were favorable for denouncing, or rather publicly flaying, the faults and vices of those over whom Jesus had triumphed in the preceding discussions. Every hope of leading them to better dispositions was now lost; but it was important to put the disciples and the multitude on their guard against the bad example and harmful influence of those men. That is what our Lord does in this eloquent discourse. He unmasks the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees and mercilessly exposes their avarice, selfishness, and pride. A few strokes are all the Savior needs to depict their habitual conduct; but He uses such vivid colors that the sad portrait of those baleful men is deeply engraven on all minds and they are stigmatized forever. "He brands them as with fire," wrote St. Jerome.[911] His wrath is poured forth upon those vile souls, whose evil spirit had already inflicted so great harm to the progress of the gospel. There were a few good Pharisees and Scribes, at whom our Lord's reproaches and anathemas were not aimed. His terrible denunciations are addressed to the great mass of the party, which they so truly describe.

[910] John 7:46.
[911] *Comment. in Matth., h. l.*

Christ's act was one of vengeance and of protection—a punishment for the guilty, a warning for the others.

The First Gospel on this occasion records a long discourse, of which St. Mark and St. Luke gives us only a short summary.[912] The author of the Second Gospel usually limits his attention to our Lord's deeds rather than His discourses. St. Luke had a special reason for being brief in the present instance, because he had already cited quite at length, at an earlier period of Christ's life, a somewhat shorter denunciation containing the principal details of the discourse we are about to consider.[913] The fact that St. Luke relates both events shows that he considered them historically distinct. It was natural that our Lord should have more than once denounced the grave and dangerous vices of the Pharisees. Although there is a close resemblance between the two discourses, yet considerable differences are to be noted, both in substance and form.[914] As in the case of the Sermon on the Mount, so in the present instance, it is often asserted, especially by modern Rationalists, that in the First Gospel we have an artificial compilation, made up of sayings that Jesus uttered at different times and places. To that we reply that it is possible that St. Matthew has inserted in this latter discourse a few lines that do not directly belong to it. But we must at once add that no proof can be adduced to show that, even to a small extent, he was the author of this great discourse, which in its present form is truly the work of Jesus.

[912] Matt. 23: 1–39; Mark 12: 38–40; Luke 20: 45–47.

[913] Luke 11: 37–52. See *supra*, pp. 96–101.

[914] Verses 1–3, 7–10, 16–22, 24, 28, 32–33 of chapter 23 of St. Matthew have nothing corresponding to them in chapter 11 of St. Luke. And what, in the First Gospel, does correspond with Luke 11: 39–52, is placed in the following order, which is not the same: Matt. 23: 46, 43, 52, 42, 39, 41, 44, 47, 48, 49–51. Moreover, in St. Matthew's account, new thoughts are inserted here and there. Only two passages of the discourse as recorded by St. Matthew, are common to the three accounts: Matt. 23: 6 f.; Mark 12: 38 f.; Luke 20: 46; and Matt. 23: 14; Mark 12: 40; Luke 20: 47.

From the introductory expressions used by St. Matthew and St. Luke,[915] it is evident that the Divine Master at first spoke to the large crowd and to those of His disciples who were gathered around Him. It was only a little later that He upbraided the Scribes and Pharisees. The denunciation may be divided into three parts.[916] In the first part, our Lord briefly describes the moral character of His enemies and urges His disciples to withdraw from their perilous influence. In the second part, He utters eight terrible maledictions against those hypocrites. In the third part, He foretells their coming punishment, and weeps over Jerusalem, which, in consequence of its unbelief in the Savior, will share their lot.

The discourse begins thus:

"The Scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do; but according to their works, do ye not; for they say, and do not."

Before denouncing the conduct of these perverse guides, the Savior makes an important distinction between their lawful authority, insofar as they were to some extent the successors of Moses, thus charged with the official interpretation of the divine law, and their personal vices, the secret motives of their unworthy conduct. Hence the twofold conclusion: Obey them, respect their office; but do not imitate them. Moreover, the obedience which our Lord here recommends supposes that the Scribes' commands will not be in contradiction with the spirit of the Law or the basic principles of morality, as we see from several restrictions mentioned further on.[917] What accusation there is in the words "They say, and do not." Saul, the future Apostle, who had studied at the feet of the Scribes, Saul the zealous Pharisee, who was familiar with the practices

[915] Matt. 23:1; Luke 20:45. St. Mark's expression (12:38) is less definite.
[916] Matt. 23:2–12, 13–32, 33–39.
[917] Matt. 23:16–36. See also Matt. 5:21–48; 15:1–20; 16:11 f.

of his teachers, develops the Savior's words in these accusing lines, directed against the Jewish doctors: "Thou that teachest another, teachest not thyself; thou that preachest that men should not steal, stealest; . . . thou that abhorrest idols, committest sacrilege; thou that makest thy boast of the Law, by the transgression of the Law dishonorest God." [918] Jesus immediately justifies His reproach by adding this dramatic detail: [919] "They bind heavy and insupportable burdens, and lay them on men's shoulders; but with a finger of their own they will not move them."

In the plan of God, the Mosaic Law was to be a privilege for the Israelites, not a burden; yet, owing to the Pharisees and the thousands of prescriptions added by them, it weighed heavily upon all Jews. What a contrast with what the Savior called His yoke and His burden! [920] And how courageously, God though He was, He bowed beneath the weight of the Law, *factus sub lege*, [921] without dispensing Himself from the most rigorous of its obligations!

Our Lord next lays bare the motives of the Pharisees' conduct:

"All their works they do for to be seen of men. For they make their phylacteries broad, and enlarge their fringes. And they love the first places at feasts, and the first chairs in the synagogues, and salutations in the market place, and to be called by men, Rabbi."

All to be seen, to be admired, all consequently for themselves. It is the sum-total of their intentions and their works: selfishness, ostentation, and boundless vanity, ingenious and

[918] Rom. 2:21–23. In this passage, St. Paul is addressing all the Jews; but of course his blame falls chiefly upon the doctors who had trained the people so poorly. The famous Diogenes also said: "The orators are zealous in saying what is right and just, but are not at all zealous in practicing what they say." (Cf. Diog. Laert., VI, 28.)

[919] Luke 11:46.

[920] Matt. 11:29.

[921] Gal. 4:4.

eager in displaying itself in everything and in all places—on the streets as well as indoors, in religious assemblies as well as at ordinary gatherings, in their everyday clothes as well as in certain sacred ornaments which pious custom had introduced. Everywhere they demand the first place and special marks of respect, in the form of salutations and titles of honor. In the matter of clothing, St. Mark and St. Luke mention the *stolae,* long flowing garments that came down to the heels.[922] We have already spoken of the sacred fringes.[923] The phylacteries [924] (or *tephillin,* as the Jews usually call them) are little strips of parchment on which certain passages of the Pentateuch are written in Hebrew characters.[925] These carefully folded strips are enclosed in tiny boxes made of parchment and provided with leather thongs, by which they are tied to the forehead or to the left arm, during the recitation of prayers and various other religious acts of the day.[926] So as to attract attention and give an impression of great piety, the Pharisees were wont to lengthen their fringes and enlarge the box and straps of the phylacteries. There were hardly enough titles of honor to satisfy these proud men. They went so far as to teach that a disciple who would fail to salute his teacher by calling him "Rabbi," would provoke the Divine Majesty to withdraw from Israel.[927] And they took great pleasure in

[922] For this reason the Latins called them *vestis talaris.* Cf. Horace, *Sat.,* I, ii, 99; *"ad talos stola demissa."*

[923] In connection with the healing of the woman with the flow of blood; Volume II, p. 442.

[924] This noun is copied from the Greek word φυλακτήρια = "preservatives." Perhaps the Hellenistic Jews chose this word purposely, to express the idea that this sacred ornament was a visible symbol intended to remind every Jew of his obligation to observe the divine commandments; but it may be that we should, partly at least, retain its usual meaning of amulette, because of the superstitious notions which the Jews of former times, as also those of to-day, connected with its use.

[925] Ex. 12:2–10, 11–17; Deut. 6:4–9; and 11:13–22.

[926] See Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* pl. 109, figs. 4, 5, 7, 11; Schürer, *Geschichte des jüd. Volkes,* 4th ed., II, 484 ff.

[927] *Bab. Berashoth, 27, 2.*

relating that on a certain day when such or such a doctor of the Law returned to his native city, his fellow-townsmen rushed forward to meet him, shouting "Rabbi, Rabbi." [928]

Jesus, addressing His words especially to His disciples, now deduced the moral from the reproaches He had just spoken to the Pharisees. In contrast with their spirit of ostentation, He sets up Christian humility, such as they, the heads of His Church, should practice. "But be not you called Rabbi. For one is your Master, and all you are brethren. And call none your father upon earth; for one is your Father, who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, Christ. He that is the greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

In these instructions we have another example of the hyperbolical form which the Savior sometimes employs to express His thought more vigorously. As a matter of fact, the Church will always have a hierarchy represented by those exercising spiritual authority in various degrees; Christ's will, from which their powers come, is that they be surrounded with respect, obedience, and affection, which could hardly be without the use of titles of honor. What Christ here means may be reduced to these two principles: true superiority belongs only to God, and man possesses nothing that is not a gift from God; as to our neighbors, the only feeling that befits a Christian, even though vested with a spiritual office, is one of fraternal charity, which creates equality between all men. If, therefore, a disciple of Christ wishes to be superior to his brethren, let it be in a relationship of humble devotedness, which puts him at the service of all.[929]

[928] See Lightfoot, *Horae Hebr. et Talmud.*, in Matt. 23:7. Edersheim cites other curious examples of this stupid vanity. See his *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 409.

[929] The name of "father" (in Hebrew *ab*, in Aramaic *abba*) was also, among the Jews, a title of honor reserved to the great and holy personages of antiquity.

The second part of the discourse is made up of eight vehement apostrophes, to which the interjection *Vae* [930] gives the form of a malediction. Jesus came to bless; but why should He not heap malediction upon those who did their utmost to destroy His work among his people? [931] Each of these anathemas contains a reason, some characteristic feature of the Pharisees' conduct. Our Lord's language is forceful, animated, abounding in figures and comparisons. As in the first part of the discourse, the dominant idea is the shameful hypocrisy of those whom He so justly condemns.

The first anathema is this: "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you shut the Kingdom of Heaven against men, for you yourselves do not enter in; and those that are going in, you suffer not to enter." [932] This amounts to saying: You are leading to damnation those for whom, by your high office, it was your duty to open the gates of Heaven. The Gospel often shows us the people well-disposed toward our Lord and advancing with joyful earnestness to the entrance of the Messianic kingdom. Often an encouraging word by the doctors of the Law would have been enough to change that happy aspiration into a deep and lively faith. But those doctors, on the contrary, tried to stifle the good dispositions of the multitude and to turn the people against the Savior.

The second anathema shows us the Scribes and Pharisees engaged in the most shameful exploitation: "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you devour the

Cf. 4 Kings 2:12; 6:21; 13:14; Ecclu. 44:1; Luke 16:24, 30. For the rabbinical literature, see Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu*, I, 278. The title καθηγήτης, which the Vulgate translates by *magister*, "master," rather means "guide"; it is impossible to say what Aramaic word corresponds to this title.

[930] Based on the Greek οὐαί, "woe."

[931] We have already considered the anathemas uttered by our Lord against the unbelieving cities of the lake shore (Matt. 11:21) and against the world on account of scandals (Matt. 18:7).

[932] Luke 11:52, contains a similar but slightly different thought; see *supra*, page 98.

houses of widows, praying long prayers. For this you shall receive the greater judgment." It is not certain that this malediction is authentic in the First Gospel, for it is lacking in important MSS. and may here be taken from St. Mark and St. Luke. But its presence in the two other Gospels fully guarantees its historicity. Josephus [933] also speaks of the evil influence which the Pharisees exercised upon the Jews of his time, owing to their sincere or affected piety. The Bible frequently represents widows as particularly deserving of compassion because they are defenseless.[934] To rob them [935] was the mark of a most shameless greed, with which the prophets more than once reproached their contemporaries.[936] To rob them by promising them long prayers, for which they were made to pay dearly, was to aggravate the fault by giving it the character of what was later called simony. Perhaps, as an encouragement, they quoted this rabbinical saying: "Long prayers make a long life." [937] In truth, this practice was what the Talmud sarcastically calls "the master-stroke of the Pharisees."

The third malediction condemns the Pharisees on account of their ill-advised religious propaganda: "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you go round about the sea and the land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, you make him the child of hell twofold more than yourselves."

This description is full of irony. The fruit of so much going back and forth on land and sea is the winning of one proselyte. And in many cases the apparent conversions which the Pharisees, after so much trouble, succeeded in making in the pagan world, resulted merely in introducing undesirable re-

[933] *Ant.*, XVII, ii, 41.

[934] Cf. Ex. 22:22; Deut. 10:18; 14:29; 16:11, 14; 24:17, etc.

[935] The forceful metaphor "devour" is used in a like sense by the writers of Greece and Rome.

[936] Is. 1:23; 10:2; Jer. 7:6; Zach. 7:10, etc.

[937] Lightfoot, *Horae Hebr. et Talm.*, in Matt. 23:14.

cruits into their ranks. In a few significant sentences the Talmud shows how little account honest Jews took of most of the proselytes. It represents them as being an obstacle to the coming of the Messias, as a shameful disease for Israel.[938] In itself Jewish proselytism was a most praiseworthy act of zeal, since its aim was to lead idolaters to the knowledge of the true religion, and at that time many pagans of the best society felt themselves drawn to Judaism.[939] But the propaganda was sometimes so ineptly conducted and, as Christ says, so defective in its moral results, that it aroused the satire of Roman writers.[940] The so-called converts soon presented a sad mixture of Pharisaical joined with pagan vices, and thus became "children of gehenna."

The fourth anathema denounces the false theory of the Jewish doctors about oaths: "Woe to you blind guides, that say: Whosoever shall swear by the Temple, it is nothing; but he that shall swear by the gold of the Temple, is a debtor. Ye foolish and blind; for whether is greater, the gold, or the Temple that sanctifieth the gold? And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gift that is upon it, is a debtor. Ye blind; for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? He therefore that sweareth by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things that are upon it. And whosoever shall swear by the Temple, sweareth by it, and by Him that dwelleth in it. And he that sweareth by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God and by Him that sitteth thereon." The Pharisees were indeed "blind guides." They must have freely blinded themselves to put forth such pernicious principles and to make those subtle distinctions which enabled them to take oaths on the slightest

938 *"Sicut scabies Israeli." Bab. Niddoth,* 13, 2.

939 See Volume I, p. 161. The word "proselyte" is of Greek origin and means: "he who comes towards," hence a convert.

940 *V. g.,* Horace, *Sat.,* I, iv, 142–143: *"Ne veluti te Iudaei cogemus in hanc concedere turbam."*

occasion and to release themselves from such oaths with equal facility. All that was hypocrisy and wickedness. We have no need to dwell upon this point, which our Lord treated at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount.[941] Here He further developed the examples, that He might stress the absurd lack of logic and the immoral character of the practices recommended by the Pharisees—practices which the Romans quite justly ridiculed.[942]

The next anathema, the fifth, sarcastically describes the meticulous conduct of the Scribes and their associates with regard to purely imaginary obligations and their curious laxity of conscience in the matter of the loftiest and strictest precepts of religion: "Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left the weightier things of the Law: judgment and mercy and faith. These things you ought to have done, and not to leave those undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel." The first half of this anathema is cited earlier by St. Luke, and we have already explained it.[943] In His denunciation uttered on that occasion, Christ mentioned by name two plants, mint and rue, which the Pharisees scrupulously subjected to tithing, without there being any legal obligation to do so.[944] In this present passage, the rue is replaced by anise and cummin, two other fragrant plants, used by the ancients as condiment and as medicine.[945] The Jews grew them in their gardens. The second half of the malediction, in a striking antithesis, still more emphatically draws attention to

[941] Matt. 5: 33–37.

[942] Martial, *Epigram.*, I, 97.

[943] Luke 11: 42. See *supra*, pp. 97 f.

[944] In the tractate *Maaseroth*, I, 1, of the Talmud, we read: "Whatever is eaten and does not spoil and grows in the ground is subject to the tithe."

[945] Botanists call them *Anethum graveolens* and *Cuminum sativum*. Both of them belong to the family of the *Umbellifereae*. Cf. Fillion, *Atlas d'Histoire Naturelle de la Bible*, pl. 24, figs. 5, 6.

the illogical conduct of the Pharisees. With minute care they strained their drinks because they feared lest, by inadvertently swallowing a little fly that might have drowned in the beverage, they would break the laws regarding legal purity. On the contrary, their conscience often became excessively broad, when they disregarded the most pressing divine prescriptions. This is what is expressed by the hyperbole "to swallow a camel." [946]

The sixth malediction, substantially the same as one we have already seen in the Third Gospel,[947] condemns the Pharisees because in the depth of their soul they were as defiled as they strove outwardly to appear clean. Again their hypocrisy and pride are flayed by Christ, who alludes to the numberless ablutions to which they subjected every object which they used at table.[948] "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you make clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but the inside is full of rapine and uncleanness. Thou blind Pharisee, first make clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, that the outside may become clean."

The apostrophe, "Thou blind Pharisee . . . ," which singles out each of the guilty Pharisees for rebuke, is quite lashing. The words, the "inside is full of rapine . . ." mean that the Pharisees often obtained their food by dishonest means.[949]

The seventh anathema [950] expresses very nearly the same thought as the preceding one. It also contains a reference to the customs of the time. Every year, a few weeks before the

[946] The fact that the camel was one of the "impure" animals, made the rebuke all the more severe. For the modern Jewish practice of *"colare culicem,"* see Fillion, *L'Évangile selon S. Matthieu,* p. 446.

[947] Luke 11:39–41.

[948] Cf. Mark 7:4.

[949] In the Vulgate we read this variant: "within you are full of rapine and uncleanness."

[950] It has its parallel in Luke 11:44; but is less developed there, and the idea is presented in another form.

Passover, all tombs were whitewashed, either to honor the dead or to make the sepulchers more visible, so that no one would inadvertently touch them (such contact involved legal defilement [951]). "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you are like to whited sepulchers, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones and of all filthiness. So you also outwardly indeed appear to men just; but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." The newly whitewashed sepulchers produced a fine effect when seen through the verdure of the countryside. One may judge of this from the appearance of Mohammedan tombs, which, like the sepulchers of the Jews, are often whitewashed; they are a pleasing contrast to the dark mass of cypress trees surrounding them. But under those painted and carved stones is hideous corruption. This, says our Lord, is a true image of the Pharisees.

The sepulchers of Abraham, Sara, Isaac, and Jacob at Hebron, of Rachel near Bethlehem, of David and many ancient prophets at Jerusalem, and of Joseph not far from Nablus, are still venerated. This fact is an evidence of the devotion which the Jews had for tombs. It furnishes the subject matter of the Savior's eighth malediction, which, by its striking and unexpected application, gives those whose conduct it describes, the hardest blow of all: "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; that build the sepulchers of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the just, and say: If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore you are witnesses against yourselves, that you are the sons of them that killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers." [952]

[951] Cf. Num. 19:16; *Maasar sheni*, V, 1, etc.

[952] This anathema we have already seen, in a slightly different form, in Luke 11:47 f. See *supra*, page 98.

A glance at a plan of Jerusalem and its neighborhood [953] will suffice to note several celebrated rock-hewn tombs, which certainly existed in our Lord's time, bearing the names of tombs of the Kings, of the Prophets, of Absalom, of Zacharias. The Pharisees shared in their ancestors' zeal in constructing fine mausoleums in honor of their holy personages or in maintaining and adorning those already existing. But, says our Lord, as He gives a different turn to the thought, what hypocrisy that is, since they have determined to put the greatest of all the prophets to death, and since they will treat His missionaries and disciples with the same cruelty. Thus do they show that, from both the moral and the natural point of view, they were the children of those who had criminally put the ancient prophets to death; for they breathed the same hatred for truth, the same spirit of revenge against whosoever criticized their conduct. "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers," are words of remarkable vigor. Christ, so to speak, provokes His enemies to fill to overflowing the cup of divine vengeance by their wicked persecutions; or rather, He prophesies what they will soon do, and the punishments which they will thus draw down upon themselves.

This thought of the future punishments that will strike, not only Israel's leaders, but the whole Jewish nation, especially Jerusalem, forms the third part of the denunciation. In the first words, Christ calls His enemies "serpents," a "generation of vipers," epithets which we have already heard on His lips and on the lips of John the Baptist; [954] then He fulminates the terrible condemnation: "You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell? Therefore behold I send to you prophets and wise men and scribes; and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and perse-

[953] Cf. Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible*, pl. 15, especially to the north and east. See also Chauvet and Isambert, *Syrie, Palestine*, pp. 315–336.

[954] Cf. Matt. 3:7, and 12:34.

cute from city to city; that upon you may come all the just blood that hath been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the just, even unto the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom you killed between the Temple and the altar. Amen I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation." "The judgment of hell" is a judgment that condemns to hell. The reader will note that Christ designates His future messengers, His Apostles and other missionaries, by Jewish terms. They will indeed be His prophets, His wise men, His doctors. Devoted to His Person and cause, they will go about Palestine, then through the Roman world, fearless and blameless. But they will be as lambs in the midst of wolves.[955] Dangers and persecution therefore await them, as the Savior already foretold.[956] The Acts of the Apostles relates the beginning of that hostility which often became bloody, and the annals of the first centuries of the Church describe in much detail the glorious *Acta* of the martyrs and confessors.[957]

The murder of Abel was the first shedding of innocent blood. Since then, what a long series of similar crimes there had been in Israel's history! Our Lord holds the entire Jewish generation of His time responsible for it, especially the Pharisees, because of the solidarity uniting all the members of one and the same family. It has been said that, "by virtue of the unity of the human species, no one exists separately and solely for himself; he lives in the ensemble to which he belongs and whose lot he shares, as a branch shares in the lot of the tree. According to this law, each generation does not begin to sin in its own name, but continues the crimes of the previous generation, and the debt accumulates, although the sum-total is figured according to a reckoning beyond our grasp. Then,

[955] Matt. 10: 16.

[956] Matt. 10: 17–23.

[957] St. Luke (11: 49–51) on another occasion quotes, almost in its entirety, this same condemnation of the murderous Pharisees. We explained it briefly at that point of our narrative. See *supra*, page 98.

when the time arrives to regulate the accounts, when the divine punishments come, the descendants truly and literally expiate the sins of their ancestors. Evidently we are here speaking only of temporal, earthly punishment. But that punishment never fails to be inflicted, however many ages God postpones it." [958] The history of every race contains terrible examples of this solidarity.[959] In His closing words of accusation and condemnation, our Lord with a solemn "Amen I say to you" declared that the divine punishment was to fall upon the generation then living.

After a short pause, the Savior, thinking of the frightful evils that would afflict Jerusalem, felt deeply moved and addressed these tender words to the guilty but beloved city:

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not?" [960]

The Savior's whole heart is to be found in these pathetic lines. He will have to strike, for He foresees only too well the futility of His last appeal, since all the others had been rejected. The words "how often" are valuable from the standpoint of exegesis. They show that, although the first three Evangelists do not directly mention any visit of Christ to Jerusalem during His public life, except this one at His last Pasch, He had come to Jerusalem frequently and had exercised

[958] Schegg, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 2d ed., *h. l.*

[959] On the exegetical difficulty offered by the words "Zacharias, the son of Barachias," consult the principal commentaries on the Gospel of St. Matthew, *in h. l.* "Between the temple and the altar": *i. e.*, between the sanctuary in the stricter sense of the word (τοῦ ναοῦ) and the altar of holocausts, which was in the Court of the Priests. Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 99, figs. 1, 2.

[960] St. Luke (13:34 f.) also records this apostrophe; but the place to which he assigns it is less suitable than that given it in the First Gospel. It is somewhat difficult to suppose that it was uttered far from Jerusalem, as would be the case according to St. Luke's account.

an active ministry there, as related by St. John. The figure of a hen [961] loudly calling her brood and hiding them under her wings at the first intimation of danger, is one of great beauty.[962] What sadness there is in our Lord's final words, "Thou wouldest not"! He thus declared that He was not responsible for the sad lot awaiting Jerusalem. The sheltering wing under which it refuses to seek protection will be entirely withdrawn, and thenceforth nothing will shield it. To its inhabitants are spoken the prophetic words, "Behold, your house shall be left to you, desolate." To what a state it will be reduced by the cruel eagles of Rome!

However guilty the Jews were, Christ did not wish to leave them under the shadow of these threats without giving them a hope of salvation. Therefore He concludes with these somewhat consoling words: "I say to you, you shall not see Me henceforth till you say: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." This acclamation is the very one with which He was greeted two days before by the multitudes that took part in His triumphal entry.[963] The Jews will reëcho the same cry in honor of Christ, but it will be at a distant time; in this passage the reference must be to His second coming at the end of the world, when the great mass of the nation, converted and repentant, will hail Him as the Messias. From the general tenor of the discourse, one would scarcely have ventured to expect this consoling prospect, which St. Paul also, under divine inspiration, holds out to his former coreligionists.[964]

A peaceful little episode, remarkably touching and edifying, closely follows the great conflict so minutely described by the three Synoptics.[965] After those lengthy and fatiguing disputes,

[961] In this place, the Greek noun ὄρνις has this special meaning.

[962] For similar figures of speech, see Deut. 32:11; Ps. 90:4; Is. 31:5, etc.

[963] Matt. 21:9; Mark 11:10; Luke 19:38; John 12:13.

[964] Rom. chap. 11.

[965] St. Matthew does not mention it. But St. Mark (12:41–44) and St. Luke (21:1–4), especially the former, depict it graphically.

our Lord, wishing to rest a little, ascended the steps leading from the Court of the Gentiles to the Women's Court, and sat down opposite the thirteen contribution boxes, which were in the form of trumpets.[966] They were placed beneath the colonnades of this Court and were intended to receive the voluntary offerings of the people for the expenses of public worship and the maintenance of the sacred edifices. Each of the boxes bore an inscription indicating the use to be made of the money placed therein. For example: "For the [sacrifices of] doves."

Seated quietly at a little distance from His Apostles, who had come with Him and probably were talking together, Jesus carefully observed what was happening around Him.[967] The scene was very interesting. Pilgrims, coming in thousands to take part in the Paschal festival, dropped their offerings into the boxes; many rich persons contributed large sums with Pharisaic ostentation (*"Multi divites jactabant multa"*). Now there came a woman of lowly station,[968] evidently very poor, whose dress showed her to be a widow. Into one of the boxes she timidly dropped two little coins— two *lepta,*[969] says the Greek text; two *perutah,* a Jew would have said—worth together about one-third of a cent in our money. But Christ, who had not been moved by the offerings of the rich, was touched at sight of the poor widow's mite.

Calling His Apostles to Him, He praised this apparently insignificant deed, disclosing to them its great merit, which

[966] In Hebrew, *shefaroth.* See the Mishna, *Shekalim,* VI, 5; *Joma,* 55, 2; Lightfoot, *Decas Chorogr. in Marc.,* chap. 3, sec. 4.

[967] St. Mark: ἐθεώρες, "He contemplated." St. Luke: ἀναβλέψας, "having cast an attentive look upward." This detail supposes that the Savior at first held His head inclined.

[968] In St. Mark's account, the words μία, "one," and πτωχή, "poor," are opposed to "many that were rich." St. Luke uses the adjective πενιχρά (Vulg., *paupercula*), "utterly poor."

[969] The *lepton* was the smallest Greek coin. It was worth about one-eighth of an *as.* Therefore the two coins offered by the widow amounted to one-quarter of an *as* (*quadrans*), as St. Mark adds for the information of his Roman readers.

His supernatural knowledge made known to Him. "Amen I say to you," He began, "this poor widow hath cast in more than all they who have cast into the treasury." This paradoxical statement required explanation. The Savior therefore continued: "All they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want cast in all she had, even her whole living." Although this woman's offering was but a paltry sum, yet it showed a generosity amounting to heroism. She had sacrificed all she had for God, not even keeping for herself one of her two *lepta*. Though her act was so different from that of Lazarus' sister Mary, who had poured on the Master's head an ointment worth three hundred *denarii*, yet it recalls Mary's deed, for it was prompted by unbounded love. For this reason the memory of these two women will endure as long as the world.[970]

It is likely that this is the proper place for the insertion of a rather mysterious incident, full of happy promise for the future.[971] We may call it the homage of the Greeks. True, St. John places it immediately after the Savior's triumphal entry into Jerusalem; but that fact does not militate against our supposition, because he is silent about all the other incidents of Monday and Tuesday of Holy Week. Moreover, it is hardly possible that the episode took place in the evening of Palm Sunday, since St. Mark, with his usual exactness, says [972] that the hour was then late and that Jesus, after a rapid glance about the Temple, at once retired to Bethania. We shall see later on that the incident closes our Lord's public ministry: this brings us again to Tuesday evening of Holy Week.

[970] In the rabbinical tractate *Vajjikra Rabba*, 3, we read that when a certain Jewish priest contemptuously refused an offering of a handful of flour that was brought by a poor woman, God told him in a dream that this humble gift had as great value as though the giver had offered herself in sacrifice.

[971] John 12:20–36.

[972] Mark 11:11.

We may suppose that Christ was still in the Court of the Gentiles, with the Twelve, when some "Hellenes," as the sacred writer calls them,[973] came to the Apostle Philip and said to him: "Sir, we would see Jesus." These men, whose number we do not know, were certainly not Jews living in Greek countries, for in that case the Evangelist would have designated them by the usual term "Hellenists." [974] They were of pagan birth, but certainly affiliated with Judaism as proselytes, since St. John says that they "came up [to Jerusalem] to adore [the true God] on the festival day [of the Pasch]." It is sometimes asked why they went to Philip with their request. On this point we are reduced to mere hypotheses. The Evangelist reminds us that Philip "was of Bethsaida of Galilee," a district with a large Gentile population. Hence it is thought that these Hellenes may have lived in that region and may have been acquainted with the Apostle. Let us simply admit that we do not know. It was from a feeling of delicacy that these strangers did not address themselves directly to the Savior, but rather to one of His immediate followers. Their "*Volumus* . . ." ("We would see Jesus") shows that they are resolute. And the opportunity was really excellent. "To see Jesus" means, in this context, to have a personal interview with Him, to talk with Him for a few moments.[975] It was not vain curiosity that prompted this desire: their purpose was to consult Him about some religious matter, perhaps even about His Messianic character, since they had been impressed by all they had heard of Him and by what they themselves had beheld. Philip was somewhat embarrassed by their request, for the Master had heretofore avoided concerning Himself personally with the pagans.[976] Philip, not wishing to take

[973] "Ελληνες (Vulg., *Graeci*).

[974] 'Ελληνισταί. Cf. Acts 6:1; 9:29; 11:20.

[975] On this special meaning of the verb ἰδεῖν, see Luke 13:35; 9:9; 23:8; Acts 28:20.

[976] Cf. Matt. 15:24.

upon himself the responsibility of introducing them to Jesus, consulted his friend Andrew, and together they notified the Master.[977]

Did the interview so earnestly desired by these Hellenes, actually take place? The Gospel does not enlighten us on this point; after briefly setting forth the facts we have just considered, it passes at once to an instruction given by the Savior in the presence of all who were then gathered about Him. We would like to believe that shortly afterwards He granted these proselytes the favor they asked. We have several times noted the kindness with which He placed Himself at the disposal of those who wished to speak to Him. However this may be, they heard at least the indirect reply He made to them, when He pointed out the conditions to be fulfilled in order to become His true disciples. St. John says nothing further. He is not greatly concerned with the outward aspect of events, but with their moral substance. It is to this latter he devotes his attention, passing over all the rest.[978] The Magi had come, as firstfruits of the Gentile world, to adore the Infant God in His crib. The Fourth Gospel now shows us Hellenes coming to Him on one of the last days of His life, also venerating in Him the Christ, the Redeemer. The new homage which the pagan world offers the Savior of mankind

[977] Commentators have frequently remarked that Philip and Andrew were the only Apostles whose names were Greek.

[978] For some time it was not uncommon to consider these Hellenes who wished to offer their homage to the Savior, as envoys of Abgar, king of Edessa, in Syria. This view was in conformity with a remark by Eusebius of Caesarea (*Hist. Eccl.*, I, 13), that that ruler had invited Christ to come into his country and live there, promising Him a hearty and distinguished welcome as compensation for the persecutions inflicted upon Him by His countrymen. Since the Gospel narrative tells us that these Greeks had come to Jerusalem, not for the purpose of seeing Jesus, but to take part in the Paschal celebration, it is evident that the story of the relations of Abgar with our Lord has no connection with the present episode. On the two apocryphal letters supposedly exchanged between the Savior and Abgar, see Fabricius, *Codex Apocryph. Novi Testamenti*, II, 388 ff.

opens up a vast prospect of a spread of the gospel soon to be undertaken throughout the world. Our Lord considered the present hour as a most decisive one, both for Himself and for all mankind. His discourse begins as follows:

"The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified. Amen, amen I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal. If any man minister to Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also shall My minister be. If any man minister to Me, him will My Father honor."

The first line has a particularly solemn tone. We know what our Lord habitually meant by His "hour." He used the expression so often that we comprehend its full meaning. It indicates especially the time of His Passion and death. That sorrowful hour was approaching; yet He spoke of it as of a glorification. This is because His sufferings and humiliations would promptly determine His eternal triumph, not only in Heaven, after His Ascension, but also on earth, which His name, His gospel, and His Church were ready to invade and conquer.

In two ways Christ explained the seeming paradox of His glorification by means of an ignominious death. First, He used the example of a grain of wheat cast into the earth, becoming fertile only on condition that it lose its first life.[979] Secondly, by a similar law of the moral world, a law which Christ had already stated several times,[980] it declared that death is often necessary to produce a new and higher life: "He that loveth his life shall lose it. . . ." Jesus then applied this principle to His disciples: "If any man minister to Me, let him follow

[979] St. Paul makes use of a similar comparison in 1 Cor. 15:36–38, 42–44.
[980] Matt. 10:39; 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33.

Me. . . ." If they wished to acquire eternal life and glory, they, like their Master, must first pass through tribulations and sacrifices. The coming withdrawal of Christ will, therefore, be no hindrance to His own glorification or to the success of His work: quite to the contrary.

From the glorious prospect of the future we are suddenly led to a painful and violent combat taking place for a moment in Christ's soul. The tone becomes tragic. The Savior's discourse changes to a sort of monologue, twice interrupted by a short prayer to His heavenly Father. He trembles at the prospect of the cross and experiences a foretaste of Gethsemani. "Now is My soul troubled. And what shall I say? [Shall I say:] Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause I came unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name."

His soul was troubled.[981] But this "troubling" contains a valuable lesson for us. The struggle taking place in Christ's soul, between the superior part and the lower part, if we may apply these expressions to Him—between the spirit and the flesh, as St. Paul would say—shows us how completely He had adopted human nature with its many infirmities. Although this emotion was extremely poignant, it did not last long. A generous reaction restored the deepest peace to that noble heart. What eloquence is in the simple words "for this cause," that is, to suffer and to die a cruel death. We should also remark that Christ does not ask His personal glorification as a reward, although He knows and has foretold that it will infallibly come. He thinks first of all of His Father's glory; the rest is secondary for Him.

No sooner had Christ finished this prayer, than a voice from Heaven was heard, saying: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." It was a magnificent answer from the heavenly Father, who again, as at the baptism and the Trans-

[981] We have already noted examples of it; see Luke 19:41; John 11:33, 38.

figuration,[982] publicly accredited His beloved Son and openly approved His conduct. The Evangelist here briefly describes the impression experienced by those present, when the voice was heard above them. The sound must have been a loud one, for many thought it was thunder. Others, who were able to distinguish some of the words, but did not grasp their meaning, said to one another: "An angel spoke to Him." Only Jesus and His disciples, St. John among them, understood the heavenly words.[983]

The Divine Master continued, taking this mysterious phenomenon as His starting point: "This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of the world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself."

The prodigy which had just occurred concerned Jesus Himself only very indirectly, because He did not need so impressive a testimony. But His Father thus gave the Jews and, indeed, all men a supreme notification that He might draw them all to Christ. The lines following this *nota bene* are remarkable in more ways than one, for Jesus rises to a lofty plane, contemplating the whole future of His Church. It was like a hymn of triumph, in majestic, rhythmic style. In the clear light of His divine foreknowledge, the Savior beholds His future victory over all His foes, as though it were already a reality. He sees the wicked world, that mighty adversary, judged and condemned; the "prince of this world," that is, Satan, as He calls him after the manner of His countrymen,[984] violently driven out from most of his domain, thanks to the conversion of the pagans.

[982] Matt. 3:17; 17:5, and parallel passages.

[983] In like manner, St. Paul was the only one to understand the words which Christ spoke to him, after striking him to the ground on the road to Damascus. His companions perceived only confused sounds. (Cf. Acts 9:4, 7; 22:9.)

[984] In Hebrew, *Sar ha olam*. This name appears again in our Lord's farewell discourse, John 14:30, and 16:11. St. Paul uses similar expressions, 2 Cor. 4:4 and Eph. 2:2; 6:12.

That was a negative result of redemption. We next learn the positive result, a thousand times greater and more consoling: while the world and the chief of the infernal powers will be vanquished, Jesus sees Himself "lifted up," and from the height of His throne, draws to Himself all mankind.[985] But what a "lifting up" and what a throne for the Messias! A cross, an infamous gibbet! As we know from other of our Lord's words,[986] and as the Evangelist here says explicitly, Christ by these words was alluding to the cross on which He would be fastened and raised up, to die there in frightful agony. But for the moment He is unmindful of the painful and ignominious character of the execution and considers only the result. On the cross, with His arms extended, as though in kindly welcome to all men, how many He will draw to Him, not by compulsion, but by a moral pressure which nowise hinders the action of free will! Again He makes Himself the center of the faith, adoration, and love of His Church. As St. Augustine said, "He overcame the world, not with iron, but with wood." [987]

Those listening to our Lord partly understood; at least they grasped this much that the "lifting up" to which He attributed such glorious results presupposed, as a necessary condition, His more or less proximate death, and from that fact they deduced an argument against His claim to the Messiaship. "We have heard out of the Law, that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest Thou: The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" With what contempt they mention this title! And how disdainfully they contrast the authority of Jesus, who spoke to them of a mortal Messias, with that of the Law, that is, of the inspired writings, accord-

[985] In the Greek text, the reading *πάντες*, in the masculine ("all men") seems more authentic than the neuter *πάντα* (Vulg., *omnia*), "all things."

[986] John 3:14; 8:28.

[987] *Tractat. in Ps.*, 54, n. 12.

ing to which the reign of the Messias was to be eternal." They had in mind certain prophetic passages of the Old Testament,[988] which they interpreted after their own fashion, because they were unable to distinguish between the Messias' first and second coming and because they were imbued with false preconceptions about the most beautiful and consoling of all their dogmas.

Without answering these insolent objections, our Lord gave His questioners an important lesson in the form of an exhortation. "Yet a little while, the light is among you. Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not. And he that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth. Whilst you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light."

This was a warning to take advantage of His presence among them, that they might attain to salvation by faith. It is Himself He designates by the beautiful figure of the light, which is so often applied to Him in the Fourth Gospel.[989] But this bright sun would soon disappear for Israel. Israel, plunged in dense moral darkness, would be like a traveler gone astray in the dead of night and unable to find his way.[990] These are the last words which our Lord publicly addressed to His countrymen. Therein we seem to detect an accent of half-restrained sadness and tenderness. He loved His people and was eager to exercise His office of Savior in their regard; and He was greatly pained at seeing them so obstinate in their indifference or unbelief. Then, with a deeply grieved heart, "He went away and hid Himself from them," as He did on a former occasion;[991] but this time it was a final departure,

[988] *V. g.,* Ps. 88:29, 36, 37; 109:4; Is. 9:6; Dan. 7:14. See also, in the Jewish theology of the time, the *Sibylline Oracles,* III, 49 f.; the Psalms of Solomon, 17:4; Henoch, 62:14.

[989] John 1:4; 3:19; 8:12; 9:5.

[990] On this figure, see John 11:9 f.; 1 John 2:11.

[991] John 12:36.

for His words were His farewell discourse to the multitude.

At this point, before beginning the narrative of the Passion, St. John pauses to cast a glance back over the Savior's public life and to state the results. This glance [992] shows better than many isolated incidents had done, the tragic phenomenon of a nation so highly favored by God, as the Jews were, rejecting Him who was the keystone of their history and the chief purpose of their existence—Him who they had been eagerly awaiting for centuries, their Liberator and Messias—rejecting Him despite all the proofs He had given of His divine origin and mission. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans,[993] studies this mysterious problem at greater length and connects it, as does the beloved disciple, with its real cause—Israel's hard-heartedness, foretold by the prophets. Religious history contains no fact more surprising, more paradoxical, more desolating than this. St. John first sets down a few reflections of his own regarding the unbelief of the Jews.

"Whereas He had done so many miracles before them, they believed not in Him; that the saying of Isaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he said: Lord, who hath believed our hearing, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because Isaias said again: He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Isaias, when he saw His glory, and spoke of Him." [994]

The Evangelist mentions both the fact and its cause. The fact was there, palpable and poignant, going back in the Savior's history; He Himself had spoken of it.[995] The Jews, as a nation, had refused to accept the Christ, and in that they were

[992] John 12:37–50.
[993] Chaps. 9–11.
[994] John 12:37–41.
[995] John 6:36–38; 10:25 f., etc.

the more unpardonable, since He had so constantly placed before their eyes the most evident proof of His mission, in the form of brilliant miracles, as the Evangelist is at pains to remark. Seeking the cause of this sad fact, St. John finds it in a prophecy of Isaias,[996] which was generally applied to the Messias, and in which the prophet complains, in the Messias' name, of the sadly negative results of His preaching. Israel's sinful obstinacy in unbelief entered into the divine plan, since it had been predicted so many centuries before. In a sense it was true that the Jews of our Lord's time "could not believe," as St. John shows by another text taken from the same prophet,[997] a text which Jesus had already used as the basis of a similar proof.[998] Therein is a profound mystery: the reconciling of human free-will with divine foreknowledge. But it is certain that God's foreknowledge does not at all hinder free will. The Jews could have believed, had they been willing to take the means; they alone must bear the responsibility for their blindness and hardness of heart.

After citing this second text of Isaias, the Evangelist makes a remark which at first glance may seem surprising. Did the great prophet have the privilege of beholding the glory of the Messias by anticipation? Yes, on the occasion of the famous vision which he describes in the sixth chapter of his book, and during which he was allowed to behold Jehovah, the God of Israel, adored by the seraphim. But the Jehovah of the Old Testament is, according to Christian revelation, God in the trinity of Persons, so that this passage contains a very strong proof of the preëxistence and divinity of our blessed Lord.

After thus dwelling upon the unbelief of his fellow-Jews, St. John, as though fearful lest he had accused them over-

[996] Is. 53: 1. Cf. Rom. 10: 16.

[997] Is. 6: 9 f. This text is quoted exactly, but with a certain freedom, in a way independent both of the Hebrew and of the Septuagint.

[998] Matt. 13: 14 f.

much, remarks that "many of the chief men also believed in Him," acknowledging Him to be the Messias. Among these chief men are Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, both of whom belonged to the Sanhedrin.[999] Yet the Evangelist is obliged at once to correct himself and to say that, in the case of many of these disciples, at least for a time, the faith was regrettably weak, hesitating to show itself outwardly. Fear of the Pharisees, says St. John, consequently human respect, held these souls back and prevented them from giving themselves entirely to the Savior, because they were afraid of the excommunication with which His followers had been threatened.[1] In acting thus, did they not show that "they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God"?

With the Jews' stubborn obduracy, St. John contrasts the Savior's declaring and openly proclaiming the necessity of believing in Him and His teaching.[2] The Messias did everything He could to convert His people; this fact leaves the fault of the Jews all the more unpardonable. The expression, "Jesus cried and said," which introduces these lines, has led some to suppose that we have here a discourse delivered by our Lord at that time. But this view is refuted by the Evangelist, who tells us a few lines earlier,[3] that the Savior had said a last farewell to the Jews. It seems that the Evangelist in this passage simply intends to give a summary of the doctrine which the Master had constantly preached during the three years of His public life. This summary reproduces the Savior's language as well as His thought:

"He that believeth in Me, doth not believe in Me, but in Him that sent Me. And he that seeth Me, seeth Him that sent Me. I am come a light into the world; that whosoever believeth in Me,

[999] John 3:1–2; 19:38 f., etc.
[1] John 9:22.
[2] John 12:44–50.
[3] John 12:36.

may not remain in darkness. And if any man hear My words and keep them not, I do not judge him; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that despiseth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father who sent Me, He gave Me commandment what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting. The things therefore that I speak, even as the Father said unto Me, so do I speak."

It would have been difficult to make more emphatic the grievous responsibility of the unbelieving Jews. Everything in Christ's person as in His teaching had been in perfect conformity with the thought and will of His heavenly Father. He therefore had a right to appeal to the mission and authority with which God had endued Him; He had unceasingly bestowed the light of His doctrine and example upon the Jews, and it was the latter's strict duty to adhere to Him by faith.

IV. Christ's Prophecy about the Destruction of Jerusalem and His Second Coming [4]

The Synoptics are quite precise in describing the event that served as the occasion for this superb discourse.[5] Tuesday evening of Holy Week, after triumphing over the ambuscades of His enemies, after uttering His crushing denunciation of the Pharisees and bidding the unbelieving Jews a last farewell, Jesus left the precincts of the Temple, never again to return. As on the two preceding days, He took the road toward Bethania, accompanied by His Apostles. While He was traversing the Temple enclosure on the side of the Cedron valley, one of the Apostles (perhaps Peter, who is most often their

[4] See *infra*, Appendix VIII.

[5] Matt. 24:1–3; Mark 13:1–4; Luke 21:5–7. St. Mark's description is the most complete.

spokesman) made this remark, which was probably suggested by Christ's recent prediction "Your house shall be left to you, desolate": [6] "Master, behold what manner of stones and what buildings are here." It was as though he said: Does not so solid an edifice combine all the conditions necessary to escape the injury of time?

Other disciples, says St. Luke, drew the Savior's attention to the richness of the Temple and the valuable gifts that had been donated to it by many illustrious persons, belonging to the most varied classes of Jewish society, and even of the pagan world of those times. Ptolemy Euergetes, Augustus, Julius, and Herod the Great were among its noteworthy benefactors, not to mention private individuals who had put part of their fortune on deposit in the Temple treasury.[7] A much admired detail, at the entrance of the Temple, was an ornament representing a grape vine, entirely of gold, with bunches of grapes the size of an ordinary man.[8] Tacitus did not exaggerate when he said it was "a temple of vast opulence." [9] The gigantic stones referred to by our Lord's disciple were also spoken of by Josephus,[10] who mentions blocks of stone "twenty-five cubits long, eight cubits high, and twelve cubits wide." [11] Even while discounting the habitual exaggeration of the celebrated Jewish historian, we have the evidence of duly authenticated facts. Still standing is the Wailing Wall, at the foot of which the Jews pray and weep over the destruction of Jerusalem, and which supports the Temple terrace at its eastern side; it is composed of enormous stones, several of which are twelve or fifteen feet long.

Jesus, replying to the remark about the Temple buildings,

[6] Matt. 23: 38.
[7] Cf. 2 Mach. 3: 2–6.
[8] Josephus, *Ant.*, XV, xi, 3; *Bell. Iud.*, V, v, 4.
[9] *Hist.*, V, viii, 1.
[10] *Ant.*, XV, xi, 39; *Bell. Iud.*, V, v, 1 f.
[11] The cubit was about 20 inches.

said to the Apostles: "Seest thou all these great buildings? Amen I say to you, the days will come in which there shall not be left a stone upon a stone." Less than forty years later this prediction was fulfilled, and since then nothing has remained of the sumptuous edifice which seemed proof against destruction. In very fact, of the Temple itself, its secondary buildings, its galleries and its colonnades, there remains not a stone upon a stone. To this fact Josephus bears witness, saying that "Caesar [Titus] gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple," [12] which at first he wished to save, but which the fierce Zealots had set on fire. The huge blocks referred to were not part of the sacred buildings, but only of the enclosure walls, or of the substructures that were built to support the terraces. The storm of divine judgment has fallen upon the Temple at Jerusalem, as formerly it had upon the palaces of Niniveh and Thebes in Egypt.

At first the Apostles, struck with amazement, passed no remark upon this sinister prophecy, but, following Jesus, they slowly and silently mounted the western slope of the Mount of Olives. Not far from the summit, the Master stopped and sat down on the ground. Opposite stood the Temple, which from that observation point appeared even vaster and more beautiful than it did near at hand, especially when the late afternoon sun lighted its white marbles and columned galleries, its golden ornamentations, and the city which magnificently surrounded it.[13] Still under the impression of the frightful prophecy which they had heard but a short time before, four of the most intimate disciples (Peter, Andrew, James the Greater, and John) came to the Savior, while the other Apostles remained at a little distance. These four were the first He had attached to His person in a definite way,[14] and as a

[12] *Bell. Iud.*, VII, i, 1.

[13] See the description given above, p. 241.

[14] Matt. 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20; Luke 5:1–11.

consequence enjoyed a greater degree of respectful familiarity with Him. They asked Him: "Master, tell us when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the consummation of the world." [15]

In reply to this question Jesus delivered a long discourse, which is recorded, as usual, in a more developed form in the First Gospel than in the other Synoptics.[16] The subject treated is twofold, as was the Apostles' question. Our Lord speaks of the destruction of Jerusalem and of His second coming. He does not indicate any date, but simply makes known a certain number of signs that would precede and announce the approach of the two great catastrophes: the judgment of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, and the general judgment at the end of the world. It is particularly to this double "consummation," as St. Matthew expresses it,[17] that the discourse

[15] Matt. 24:3; Mark 13:3 f.; Luke 21:7. The Greek which we translate "coming" (Vulg., *adventus*) is παρουσία, *i.e.*, "presence," but a lasting, perpetual presence. Of the Evangelists, St. Matthew is the only one to use the word, and he does so only on this occasion (24:3, 27, 37, 39). But in the Apostolic Epistles the term appears often, with a like meaning, to designate Christ's second coming. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:14; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8; James 5:7; 2 Pet. 1:16; 3:12; 1 John 2:28. To-day the term "parousia" is in common use.

[16] Matt. 24:4–25:46; Mark 13:5–37; Luke 21:8–36. St. Mark and St. Luke omit all that we read in chapter 25 of St. Matthew. For the details found in chapter 24, there is a considerable resemblance between the three accounts. This is especially true of the First and Second Gospel, for at times St. Luke parts from St. Matthew and St. Mark (see particularly Luke 21:24–26, 34–36). This is the only discourse of Christ to be found in St. Mark's narrative, which is primarily concerned with deeds; but this series of prophecies was of such capital importance that it was hardly possible to omit it. And it formed an integral part of the Apostolic preaching. Does St. Matthew lengthen the discourse by inserting some things which the Savior spoke on other occasions? Various commentators suppose such to be the fact. If it be so, it is true only of a few passages, which cannot be pointed out with certainty. On the other hand, St. Matthew here omits some details recorded by the two other Evangelists. We will mention a few of them. For a further discussion of the question, we must refer the reader to the commentators.

[17] Matt. 24:3; συντέλεια (Vulg., *consummatio*). Cf. 13:40, 49.

owes the Greek title "eschatological," [18] which is now usually applied to it. The Savior's purpose in making these important revelations is indicated in the introductory words: "Take heed that no man seduce you." Again and again He returns to this idea, especially as reported in St. Mark's account; and to it He also devotes a lengthy conclusion. It was important that His disciples should, to some extent, know in advance what would take place at the time of the two dangerous crises mentioned, so as to regulate their moral conduct thereby. This knowledge would be sure to strengthen their faith against threatening perils. We have, therefore, in these words of Christ, a theoretical and practical teaching of the highest import for the Church and all its members. Although the language is mysterious at times, yet the discourse as a whole is sufficiently clear, especially now that we can separately envisage those predictions that referred to the destruction of Jerusalem.

By the turn which they gave to their question, the Apostles seemed to indicate that, in their mind, the destruction of the Temple, the second coming of the Messias, and the end of the present world formed one and the same event. Such, too, at that period, was the view of most Jews about the two latter points, which greatly engaged their attention. They were expecting, in the near future, revolutions of every kind, which would be the prelude to the establishment of a new order of things, under the sway of the Messias. On this subject there exists a whole apocalyptical literature,[19] the most celebrated portions of it being the Book of Henoch, the Psalms of Solomon, the Book of the Jubilees, the Assumption of Moses, the Ascension of Isaias, and the Apocalypse of Baruch. They are a confused mass of fantastic descriptions

[18] From the words ἔσχατος λόγος, "last word," or "last thing." Hence, a discourse regarding the last events of the history of the Jewish people and of the history of the world.

[19] So called because its outward form is that of St. John's Apocalypse.

and especially of political hopes, but contain nothing supernatural. There is no lack of bloody conflicts, Jewish victories over their enemies, interminable banquets in which the descendants of Abraham are the only ones that take part, while the Gentiles look on with vexation.[20] In this eschatological discourse our Lord also depicts some details of the consummation of the world and the coming of the Messias, and He uses figures of speech that have an outward resemblance to the figures in that extraordinary literature. But, as everywhere else, He expresses Himself with loftiness of sentiment and language, with a great nobility and purity of doctrine. He is able to transform and spiritualize everything, He raises everything to the ideal sphere.[21]

The discourse is made up of two distinct parts. The first part, in most of its details, is theoretical; Christ answers His Apostles' second question, "What shall be the sign . . . ?" It describes a large number of events which, closely or remotely, will herald the destruction of Jerusalem and the coming of Christ at the end of the world.[22] The second part is entirely practical; it contains urgent exhortations to be constantly vigilant so as not to be taken by surprise at the hour of the terrible crisis.[23] Each of these parts is divided into several sections.

The first part begins by drawing a picture of the signs that will precede the destruction of Jerusalem.[24] In the very first words, the Savior warns His followers of the gravity of the situation:

[20] See Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus,* II, 443 ff.; Lagrange, *Le Messianisme chez les Juifs,* pp. 186–209.

[21] See Appendix VIII.

[22] Matt. 24:4–35; Mark 13:5–31; Luke 21:8:33.

[23] Matt. 24:36–25:30; Mark 13:32–37; Luke 21:34–36.

[24] Perhaps referring also to the end of the world, according to the view of many Fathers and several modern Catholic commentators. See Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Matthieu,* p. 456.

"Take heed that no man seduce you. For many will come in My name, saying: I am Christ; and they will seduce many. And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that ye be not troubled. For these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be pestilences and famines and earthquakes in places. Now all these are the beginnings of sorrows." [25]

This certainly was not the reply the disciples had expected. What an enumeration of the sad and terrible events that would disturb the life of nations and individuals between our Lord's Ascension and the end of the Jewish State! Yet all that, as Christ declares, will be only the beginning, a prelude of still harsher evils. We might suppose that Tacitus was recording the realization of the first lines of the prophecy in his famous text describing the period designated by our Lord: *"Opimum casibus, atrox proeliis, discors seditionibus, ipsa etiam pace saevum. . . . Trina bella civilia, plura externa ac plerumque permixta."* [26] Although we cannot point to any false Messias, properly so called, during this period, there were at least, in a similar rôle, Simon Magus,[27] the Theudas whose sinister adventure is recorded by Josephus,[28] and others besides,[29] all of them engaged in seducing the people in one way or another. All this must happen, says Christ, because the divine plan had so decreed. If so many evils were to be only "the beginning of sorrows," what will the sorrow itself be? This is represented in the Greek text of St. Matthew

[25] Matt. 24:4–8; Mark 13:5–8; Luke 21:8–11.

[26] *Hist.* III, ii, 1. Tacitus (*Annales,* XIII, 37) also speaks of a pestilence that, at Rome alone, took 30,000 lives in a few months. The Acts of the Apostles (11:28) and Josephus (*Ant.,* XX, ii, 3) mention a famine that ravaged the whole Roman world in the reign of Claudius. Earthquakes were very frequent in the Empire between the years 60 and 70. Cf. Tacitus, *Annales,* XIV, 16; Seneca, *Quaest. Natur.,* VI, 1; Josephus, *Bell. Iud.,* IV, iv, 5.

[27] Acts 8:9.

[28] *Ant.,* XX, v, 1.

[29] *Bell. Iud.,* II, xiii, 4.

and St. Mark by the use of a noun designating the pains of childbirth,[30] the violence of which is everywhere proverbial.

Independently of these first calamities, which will be general, more direct and personal evils await the disciples of Christ. He warns them about these evils so as to prepare them to endure this other kind of trial with courage:

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall put you to death; and you shall be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then shall many be scandalized, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall seduce many. And because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold. But he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come." [31]

St. Mark and St. Luke supplement this desolate picture with details already cited by St. Matthew in his account of our Lord's instruction to the Apostles when He was sending them for the first time to preach the glad tidings.[32] In the Second Gospel we read:

"But look to yourselves. For they shall deliver you up to councils, and in the synagogues you shall be beaten, and you shall stand before governors and kings for My sake, for a testimony unto them. And unto all nations the gospel must first be preached. And when they shall lead you and deliver you up, be not thoughtful beforehand what you shall speak; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye. For it is not you that speak, but the Holy Ghost. And the brother shall betray his brother unto death,

[30] Ὠδίνων. The ancient rabbis use the same term in referring to the severe trials that were to be the immediate forerunner of the appearance of the Messias. See the Book of the Jubilees, 23: 18 f.; Henoch, 99: 4–7; 100: 1–9; the Apocalypse of Baruch, 27–29; Schoettgen, *Nov. Testam. ex Talmud. Illustr.*, II, 550 ff.; Lagrange, *Le Messianisme*, pp. 186–191.

[31] Matt. 24: 9–14; Mark 13: 9–12; Luke 21: 12–19.

[32] Matt. 10: 17–22.

and the father his son; and children shall rise up against the parents, and shall work their death."

For Christians, this will be the universal persecution by the Jews as well as by the pagans. And it will take place in the very bosom of the family, because some members, having remained hostile to Christianity, will hate their converted sons or brothers and will subject them to every sort of ill-treatment, nay, even death. False prophets and false doctors will abound and add the danger of seduction. All these causes combined will produce a most deplorable effect, which the Savior expresses by a striking figure: the charity, that is, the love, of many will grow cold. Only choice souls will remain faithful through all these dangers.

Again profane history joins with the religious history of those times to point out the literal fulfilment of these various predictions. The Acts of the Apostles records the persecutions inflicted upon the first Christians by Jews and Gentiles. Tacitus [33] supplies evidence that the prediction "many shall betray one another" was fulfilled. As to false prophets, that is, heresiarchs, we see them in growing numbers in the early Church, endangering the purity of the faith, but vigorously denounced by the Apostles.[34] The universal hatred for the Savior's disciples, is also mentioned by Tacitus [35] and in the Acts of the Apostles.[36] Amid so many sufferings, Christians will, however, enjoy precious consolations. They will know that a special paternal Providence watches over them.[37] They

[33] *Annal.*, XV, 44: *"Igitur primo correpti* [*Christiani*] *qui fatebantur; deinde, indicio eorum, multitudo ingens."*

[34] Acts 20:30; Rom. 16:17 f.; Gal. 1:7–9; Col. 2:17 f.; 1 Tim. 1:6, 7, 20; 6:3–5, 20 f.; 2 Tim. 2:18; 3:6–8; 2 Pet. 2:1–22; I John 2:18, 22 f., 26; 4:1–3; 2 John 7, etc.

[35] *Loc. cit.*

[36] Acts 28:22. The Jews of Rome, at their interview with St. Paul, said to him: "As concerning this sect, we know that it is everywhere contradicted." (Cf. Tertullian, *Apolog.*, II.)

[37] In St. Luke's account, this divine protection is indicated by a most ex-

will also know that, by bravely enduring these trials, they will be helping to prove the divinity of Christ's work, and will be aiding the spread of the gospel, which will be preached throughout the Roman world before the accomplishment of the threat of divine judgment against Jerusalem. Let them strive to persevere to the end, without allowing any impairment of their faith, hope, and charity.

Up to this point in His discourse, the Savior had mostly confined Himself to a rather general description of the preliminary signs. He now passes to the signs "of the end," as concerns Jerusalem. The picture is hardly less terrifying: [38]

"When therefore you shall see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place; he that readeth, let him understand. Then they that are in Judea, let them flee to the mountains; and he that is on the housetop, let him not come down to take anything out of his house; and he that is in the field, let him not go back to take his coat. And woe to them that are with child and that give suck in those days. But pray that your flight be not in the winter or on the Sabbath. For there shall be then great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be. And unless those days had been shortened, no flesh should be saved; but for the sake of the elect, those days shall be shortened."

The remarkable and thoroughly Hebraic expression "the abomination of desolation" is taken from the prophet Daniel,[39] according to the Septuagint Version. The first of the two nouns contains the principal idea, and in the Bible it is used especially with reference to the worship of idols, which, for all true Israelites, was the most abominable thing imaginable.

pressive figure: "A hair of your head shall not perish." Luke 21:18. Cf. 12:7, and Matt. 10:30.

[38] Matt. 24:15–22; Mark 13:14–20; Luke 21:20–24.

[39] Dan. 12:11 (cf. 9:2; 11:31). In Hebrew: *shiqquts meshomem.* According to the Septuagint and the Greek text of St. Matthew: τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως (Vulg., *abominatio desolationis*).

Ancient Jewish exegetes had no doubt but that Daniel, in using this term, had in view the profanation of the Temple at Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes, as related in the Books of Machabees.[40] It is, therefore, morally certain that the Savior used it to designate some criminal outrage against the holiness of the Jewish sanctuary.[41] Did He have in mind a particular act of profanation? Many of the Fathers thought so, and they supposed that the allusion referred to the statue of the Emperor or that of Titus, which is thought was placed in the Temple before or after the taking of Jerusalem. But these views are mere conjectures. Moreover, in our Lord's prophecy the reference must have been to some event that would precede the destruction of Jerusalem, for it says that there will be time for flight, when the "abomination" appears. What is historically certain is that the Jewish Zealots profaned the Temple by entering it and there engaging in bloody combat.[42] The Romans did the rest after the assault. So there was a horrible sacrilege.

The parenthesis, "he that readeth, let him understand," [43] contains an urgent warning by the Evangelist, who urges his readers to examine the events carefully to see whether the hour announced by Christ has not arrived and whether it is not time to take the precautions which Jesus, in His foreseeing goodness, indicates to His faithful servants, to escape the calamities that are to befall Jerusalem. The watchword is prompt flight to the shelter of the Judean mountains and everywhere else.[44]

[40] See 1 Mach. 1:49–64; 2 Mach. 6:2–9.

[41] In the First Gospel we read: ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ, without the article, "in a holy place." St. Mark is seemingly even vaguer: "[The abomination . . .] standing where it ought not." St. Luke omits this detail entirely.

[42] Josephus, *Ant.*, XII, vii, 7; *Bell. Iud.*, IV, vi, 3.

[43] This same warning is found in St. Mark's account; St. Luke omits it.

[44] Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, III, v, 3) relates that the Christians of Jerusalem and Judea, in obedience to this admonition and in consequence of a further special

As in many other passages, the Savior's language here is concrete, figurative, and paradoxical, and the thought becomes more forceful thereby. Flight is necessary at any price, by the quickest routes, and it is needful to sacrifice everything to save one's life. Christ's compassion appears at the thought of the young mothers whose journey will necessarily be retarded. In winter the roads, which at no season were very good in Palestine, often became quite bad. On the Sabbath it was lawful to journey only a short distance (two thousand cubits, about half a mile) and many Christians of Jewish birth might not think it right to exceed the established limit. The final detail, "there shall be then great tribulation . . . ," was most terribly fulfilled. The details of the siege and capture of Jerusalem, as recorded by Josephus, make one shudder. There were frightful cruelties and atrocities.[45] If the Jewish historian is not exaggerating, eleven hundred thousand of his fellow-Jews perished in Jerusalem alone[46] and 97,000 others were made prisoners and condemned to cruel deaths or to a harsh slavery. So great a number were crucified that there was not room enough for the crosses, nor were there crosses enough for all the condemned. Famine wiped out whole families; mothers devoured their own children.[47] Happily God did not forget His "elect"; to save them, He shortened the duration of the catastrophe. The siege of Jerusalem, beginning at Paschal time, did not last beyond the first days of September.

prophecy, withdrew to Peraea, to the city of Pella, at the approach of the Roman armies, and that they found safety there.

[45] See de Champagny, *Rome et la Judée,* 4th ed., II, chaps. 14–17; de Saulcy, *Les Derniers Jours de Jérusalem.*

[46] Tacitus, *Hist.,* V, xiii, 4, speaks of 600,000 dead.

[47] Josephus, *Bell. Iud.,* VI, ix, 3, and others. The following lines from St. Luke (21:23–24) are very remarkable: "There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword; and shall be led away captives into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles."

With a simple "then" by way of transition, the Divine Master abruptly turns to an event that is to take place many centuries later. He takes His hearers from the last days of Jerusalem to His second coming and the end of the world. Thus, too, the ancient prophets of Israel passed quickly from one era to another, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. First, Christ gives certain practical instructions to the Church of the end of time, to put it on its guard against the dangers that will come to it from false prophets and false Christs:

"Then if any man shall say to you: Lo here is Christ, or there, do not believe him. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive (if possible) even the elect. Behold I have told it to you beforehand. If therefore they shall say to you: Behold He is in the desert, go ye not out; Behold He is in the closets, believe it not. For as lightning cometh out of the east and appeareth even into the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together." [48]

At the very beginning of the discourse,[49] our Lord had warned His disciples to be on their guard against seducers who would claim to come in His name, that is, as the Messias. He repeats this warning now when He speaks of His second coming. His language has a tone of dramatic urgency. Since His coming will be as sudden as lightning and will be manifested everywhere at the same moment, there will be no need to seek Him in such or such a place. According to the most natural interpretation, the proverb, "Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together," indicates the quickness with which men will hasten to the place where Christ will be, that they may undergo judgment.

[48] Matt. 24:23–28; Mark 13:21–23. St. Luke quotes similar words of our Lord (Luke 17:20–24).

[49] Matt. 24:5; Mark 13:5 f.; Luke 21:8.

Without any word of transition, our Lord begins to describe the principal scenes that will form the sublime drama of His return to earth at the time of the consummation of the world:

"And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be moved. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all tribes of the earth mourn. And they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty. And He shall send His angels with a trumpet and a great voice; and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them." [50]

Here we find the same figures, at once sublime and terrible, as in the descriptions of the ancient prophets.[51] The Savior depicts frightful cataclysms that will transform and regenerate the physical world, as St. Peter also said, following the Master.[52] His description of the majestic arrival of the Son of Man, surrounded by the angels of His court, is wonderful in its brevity.

From the earliest centuries the question has been asked, what is to be understood by "the sign of the Son of Man," which will appear before the coming of the Messias. Many of the Fathers [53] were of opinion that it would be the cross, the characteristic instrument of our salvation. There is hardly any other well-founded opinion in opposition to this,[54]

[50] Matt. 24:29–31; Mark 13:24–27; Luke 21:25–28.

[51] See particularly Is. 13:10; 24:18 f.; 34:4; Ezech. 32:7; Joel 2:10, 31; Aggeus 2:21–23.

[52] See 2 Pet. 3:5–7.

[53] *E. g.*, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.*, XV, 22; St. John Chrysostom, *Homil. in Matth.*, 72; likewise St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and perhaps Origen.

[54] The Church has adopted it in her liturgy: *"Hoc signum crucis erit in caelo, cum Dominus ad judicandum venerit."*

although it is not altogether certain. Christ in a few words also describes the grief which the sight of this sign will cause among the nations gathered for the general judgment. They will strike their breasts,[55] some of them deploring their unbelief, others bemoaning the unworthy treatment that had been given the Savior. In a famous text [56] Daniel had long before represented the Messias as Son of Man, advancing upon the clouds and receiving "power and glory and dominion" from God over all nations. Our Lord evidently uses this text, thus declaring that He Himself was the Christ announced by the prophets. The description which then follows is one of great beauty. The Savior, in the exercise of His almighty power, will send His angels over the whole earth, to gather before Him all mankind, for the purpose of the judgment. St. Paul later supplements this description and dwells upon the reality of the trumpet, at the loud sound of which the dead will come forth from their tombs and will hasten to the tribunal of the great Judge.[57]

Jesus next sets forth, by means of a charming little parable, the infallible character of His predictions:

"From the fig tree learn a parable. When the branch thereof is now tender, and the leaves come forth, you know that summer is nigh. So you also, when you shall see all these things, know ye that it is nigh, even at the doors. Amen I say to you, that this generation [58] shall not pass, till all these things be done." [59]

[55] This is the meaning of the verb κόψονται (Vulg., *plangent*), which forms an alliteration with ὄψονται, "they will see." Is. 53: 1–12, and Zach. 12: 10–14, mention especially the remorse of the Jews.

[56] Dan. 7: 13 f.

[57] See 1 Cor. 15: 51 f.; 1 Thess. 4: 15–17.

[58] The generation of Jews of that time, so far as the prophecy concerns the destruction of Jerusalem; the whole human race, so far as the prophecy regards the end of the world. Our Lord here sums up all that He had said on the subject of these two great events.

[59] Matt. 24: 32–35; Mark 13: 28–31; Luke 21: 29–33.

This is the third time that we find our Lord referring to the fig tree in giving important lessons to His disciples.[60] This tree is very common in Palestine; every metaphor referring to its cultivation or life was easily understood. The season was then the beginning of spring; the sap was mounting through the branches, making them tender and flexible; the buds were filling out and bursting open, and the leaves were beginning to appear. When the leaves are full-grown, the fine season is near.[61] So, too, when men will see the occurrence of the various phenomena mentioned by Christ in the first part of His discourse, they will know, as He promises, that the events of which they are the harbingers will surely take place, and that presently. Ordinarily nothing is more frail or fleeting than words; but those of Christ excel in solidity elements that are apparently the most firm and stable.

In the second part of the eschatological discourse, our Lord deduces from the scenes He has depicted practical exhortations which were destined to be of the greatest usefulness for His Apostles and His Church. They are an answer to the question that was asked Him at the outset: "Tell us, when shall these things be?" Yet they do not announce any certain dates; on the contrary, they emphasize the uncertainty of the exact time of the fulfilment. Hence they urge a constant watchfulness. They are summed up in the repeated admonition: "Watch ye!" "Be you ready."

These exhortations begin with a declaration which at first glance may well surprise us: "Of that day or hour no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven nor the Son, but the Father." [62]

The knowledge of the angels, although superior to that of men, is limited, especially with regard to the mysteries of the

[60] Matt. 21: 18–22, and parallel passages; Luke 13: 6–9.

[61] Cf. Cant. 2: 11–13.

[62] Mark 13: 32. St. Matthew (24: 36), who also cites these words of Christ, omits *οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός*, at least according to most of the earliest documents.

Redemption.[63] According to what we have already said concerning the knowledge possessed by the God-Man,[64] it is evident that any ignorance of this sort about a capital event in which He is to play the chief part, would be incomprehensible, because, as the early Arians and Agnoetæ declared, it would be irreconcilable with His divinity. But the Church Fathers, and after them the theologians, by means of clear and firm distinctions, pointed out the true meaning of these words. The terms are restrictive only in appearance. Several Rationalist critics remark that the proof that Jesus foreknew events is the very description He gave with such remarkable exactness. As Son of God, to whom His Father has given all things, He was not unaware of the slightest detail of the divine plan.[65] Nevertheless, even to His closest friends, He communicated only such details of that plan as His Father had commissioned Him to reveal; but He had received no such commission regarding the point in question. He knew, but He did not have to make known what He knew. Shortly before His Ascension, in reply to a similar question by the Apostles, He said: "It is not for you to know the times or moments which the Father hath put in His own power." [66] These last words show, on the part of the Father and with regard to the Son, the restriction of which we have spoken.[67]

At this point our Lord made a comparison between the Deluge and His second coming, to explain the sudden character of the last judgment and the need of preparing for it: [68]

[63] Eph. 3:10; 1 Pet. 1:12.

[64] Volume I, pp. 388–395.

[65] Matt. 11:27; John 1:18; 5:20; 16:15, etc.

[66] Acts 1:7.

[67] In our commentary on the Gospel of St. Mark, p. 188, we cite a few of the solutions by the Fathers and theologians with regard to this problem.

[68] Matt. 24:37–39. Our Lord may have spoken these words repeatedly. St. Luke quotes them on an earlier occasion (Luke 13:26 f.).

"As in the days of Noe, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, even till that day in which Noe entered into the ark, and they knew not till the flood came and took them all away; so also shall the coming of the Son of Man be."

In both instances we have the same indifference, in spite of repeated warnings; and there is the same terrible surprise. Our Lord then makes use of two simple examples [69] to show again how sudden will be His coming as sovereign Judge, and how many men will be surprised in the state of sin:

"Then two shall be in the field: one shall be taken, and one shall be left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill: [70] one shall be taken and one shall be left. Watch ye therefore, because you know not what hour your Lord will come."

"One shall be taken," that is, by the angels, and placed among the elect. "One shall be left," that is, left aside, abandoned among the reprobate. "Watch ye therefore," is the conclusion, still more emphatic in the Second Gospel: "Take ye heed, watch and pray." [71] This Lord who will come is none other than Jesus Christ Himself.

At this point there begins, in the First Gospel, a long exhortation to be watchful; the other Synoptics give only a short extract of it.[72] It is made up almost entirely of parables. The first of these parables is the shortest, being simply a rough outline: [73]

[69] Matt. 24:40 f.; cf. Luke 17:35.

[70] On this detail, see Volume II, p. 584.

[71] Mark 13:33.

[72] Matt. 24:42–25:30; Mark 13:33–37; Luke 21:34–36. We will quote St. Luke's text separately; it varies notably from the other two.

[73] Matt. 24:43 f.

"This know ye, that if the goodman of the house knew at what hour the thief would come, he would certainly watch, and would not suffer his house to be broken open. Wherefore be you also ready, because at what hour you know not, the Son of Man will come."

In Palestine houses were often built of sun-baked brick or clay or unplastered stone, and it was relatively easy for a thief to make an opening in the wall and enter. The Savior warns His disciples to do in spiritual matters what a forewarned householder would not fail to do in temporal matters. A well-guarded home or conscience will have nothing to fear.

The second parable was part of a previous discourse of the Savior,[74] but under very different circumstances and with manifest variations of details:

"Who, thinkest thou, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath appointed over his family, to give them meat in season? Blessed is that servant, whom when his lord shall come he shall find so doing. Amen I say to you, he shall place him over all his goods. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart: My lord is long a coming; and shall begin to strike his fellow-servants, and shall eat and drink with drunkards; the lord of that servant shall come in a day that he hopeth not, and at an hour that he knoweth not, and shall separate him,[75] and appoint his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." [76]

The former of the two stewards was "faithful and wise" throughout the time of his master's absence. And the master's unforeseen arrival did not surprise him. The second, however, behaved in an unworthy manner; therefore he will receive a

[74] Luke 12: 42–46.

[75] Literally, in the Greek: *He will quarter him;* or, *he will cut him in two.* Masters had the right of life and death over their slaves.

[76] Matt. 24: 45–51. St. Mark merely gives a short summary (13: 34–36), which contains a few variants.

just and severe punishment. The expression "There shall be weeping . . . ," in this passage as in the other places where we have met it,[77] seems to mean eternal damnation and the sufferings of hell.

In the Second Gospel the eschatological discourse closes with this admonition: "What I say to you I say to all: Watch." [78] St. Luke [79] gives the following peroration:

"Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly. For as a snare shall it come upon all that sit upon the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Only St. Matthew has recorded the rest of the discourse, which continues at first in the form of two parables, more developed than the preceding ones, then in the form of a majestic description of the last judgment. The parable of the ten virgins [80] is famous. A moment before,[81] Jesus had spoken of a good servant as being faithful and wise. He now dwells upon the necessity of wisdom; in the other parable, the dominant note is faithfulness.

"Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be like to ten virgins, who taking their lamps went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. And five of them were foolish, and five wise. But the five foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps. And the bridegroom tarrying, they all slumbered and slept." [82]

[77] Matt. 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13.
[78] Mark 13:37.
[79] Luke 21:34–36.
[80] Or of the ten "maidens"; the idea of virginity is not brought out in the Savior's narrative; the chief thought turns upon the need of vigilance.
[81] Matt. 24:45.
[82] Matt. 25:1–5.

We have already [83] described the chief marriage ceremonies among the Jews. It is to those ceremonies that Christ again refers, to point out a moral lesson. A notable detail was the joyous procession escorting the bride to her husband's house in the evening, by the light of lamps and torches, with singing and instrumental music. The ten maidens of the parable were friends of the bride, her "maids of honor," as we should say, and, according to the most likely opinion, it was at her home, *i. e.,* in her parents' house, that they waited with her for the arrival of the bridegroom. The latter lived some distance away and therefore was late in coming. We are told that some of the maidens were "foolish," that is, unreflecting, and some were "wise," as shown by their foresight. All of them, tired by the long wait, fell asleep. This was, of course, not blameworthy, and it is not criticized. It merely serves to emphasize the suddenness of the bridegroom's arrival, which is an essential feature of the parable.

"At midnight there was a cry made: Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise: Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. The wise answered, saying: Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and for you, go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. Now whilst they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready, went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. But at last came also the other virgins, saying: Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answering said: Amen I say to you, I know you not. Watch ye therefore, because you know not the day nor the hour." [84]

The foolish virgins, upon being suddenly awakened, discovered that their lamps had gone out for want of oil. The

[83] Volume I, p. 143.
[84] Matt. 24: 6–13.

lamps of the ancients, both in the East and in the West, were usually very small,[85] and required frequent refilling. Therefore, in cases like that here mentioned, people carried a supply of oil with them. The "foolishness" of the five virgins was in neglecting this elementary precaution. Did they not know at what hour the bridegroom would arrive? And so they find the door closed, and the bridegroom refuses to recognize them. They could and should have foreseen; moreover, during the hours of waiting, they had plenty of time to send to the merchants and procure the needed oil. But they were "foolish," *i. e.,* careless to the very end. It has sometimes been asked whether the wise virgins, in refusing to share their oil with their comrades, did not display a spirit of selfishness. They themselves supply the answer to this objection, when they reply that dividing the oil would make them all run the risk of being unprepared at the bridegroom's arrival. Further, they supposed that oil could be obtained from some nearby merchant.

This parable is so clear in all its details that its application is self-evident. The bridegroom stands for our Lord, who at the end of time will celebrate His nuptials with the Church,[86] and will then lead this holy bride into Heaven for all eternity. The ten virgins symbolize all Christians. Only watchful souls, with lamps constantly lighted, that is, souls that preserve their faith and charity in all its splendor, will be admitted to the everlasting banquet of this mystical marriage.

Jesus next set forth the parable of the talents, which may be divided into three parts. The first simply introduces the chief personages:

[85] Thousands of them have been recovered. See Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* pl. 18, figs. 4, 5, 8, 10, 14.

[86] The bride does not figure in the parable, because she has no direct part in the story. The words *καὶ τῆς νύμφης*, "and the bride," are found after *νυμφίου* in several Greek manuscripts and in some ancient versions (including the Vulgate). But the best critics regard these words as an erroneous addition.

"Even as a man going into a far country, called his servants and delivered to them his goods; and to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one, to everyone according to his proper ability. And immediately he took his journey." [87]

In this cautious man, who, before leaving for a long absence, placed his goods in the hands of his servants, who were to make the most of them, we again recognize an image of the Savior. He was soon going to depart, and would be away for a long time. By this parable He shows that all His disciples, all Christians, should exercise an active watchfulness until His return. If the word "talent" in this passage means the Attic talent,[88] the three sums entrusted to the servants are respectively equal to about $5000, $2000, and $1000. They stand for the graces which Christ and His heavenly Father so abundantly bestow upon all Christians. These graces are unequal; but that inequality in their distribution is justified by the words, "to everyone according to his proper ability." The divine goodness thus proportions the gifts, and consequently the responsibility, according to the moral power of each individual. No one has any ground for complaint, because no one will be held to account except for what he receives.

The continuation of the parable tells us what was done, after the master's departure, with the money entrusted to the three servants:

"He that had received the five talents, went his way and traded with the same, and gained other five. And in like manner he that had received the two, gained other two. But he that had received the one, going his way digged into the earth, and hid his lord's money." [89]

[87] Matt. 25: 14 f.
[88] Equal to a little more than $1000.
[89] Matt. 25: 16–18.

The first two servants began their activities immediately and continued them so zealously that they succeeded in doubling the money confided to them. This was a considerable profit, but not altogether rare in the business world. And the two servants had a long time at their disposal to obtain this result. As for the third servant, he simply dug a hole in the ground and buried his master's money. The ancients, Orientals especially, often used this method of hiding money and articles of value which they wished to put in a safe place. Many a field still holds their secret. We now come to the denouement:

"But after a long time the lord of those servants came, and reckoned with them. And he that had received the five talents coming, brought other five talents, saying: Lord, thou didst deliver to me five talents; behold I have gained other five over and above. His lord said to him: Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. And he also that had received the two talents came and said: Lord, thou deliveredst two talents to me; behold I have gained other two. His lord said to him: Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. But he that had received the one talent, came and said: Lord, I know that thou art a hard man; thou reapest where thou hast not sown, and gatherest where thou hast not strewed. And being afraid, I went and hid thy talent in the earth; behold here thou hast that which is thine. And his lord answering, said to him: Wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sow not, and gather where I have not strewed. Thou oughtest therefore to have committed my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received my own with usury. Take ye away therefore the talent from him, and give it him that hath ten talents. For to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall abound; but from him that hath not, that also which he seemeth to have shall be taken away. And the unprofitable servant

cast ye out into the exterior darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." [90]

Upon his return, the master calls for an exact accounting from each of his three servants. In the words of the first two, we sense joy and modest pride. The encouragement and praise and reward from him whose interests they had so well managed, filled them with happiness.[91] But what a change takes place at the third servant's approach! In vain does he offer excuses to palliate his fault; he merely aggravates it by the arrogance of his words and manner. The justly angered master turns the servant's insolent argument against him. If that slothful servant was unwilling to inconvenience himself, as his two fellow-servants had done, to increase his master's fortune, were not the bankers at his service? He had only to "cast" [92] the money upon a banker's table—a far easier matter than to dig a hole to hide it—and this simple act would not have been profitless, for interest rates on loans were very high in our Lord's time.[93]

The sentence of condemnation is severe, but just. The guilty servant is first deprived of the talent that was confided to him, and is then cast out, far from the presence of the master who was so good to him and whose kindness he has betrayed.[94] As with the foolish virgins, so in the case of this servant, there is no accusation of a positive crime, not even of theft. But he was an "unprofitable servant," for he had not made any profit by means of the talent entrusted to him

[90] Matt. 25: 19–30.

[91] The words "Enter thou into the joy of thy lord" here indicate a very great happiness, since it means sharing in the joy of the Lord Himself.

[92] The Greek text uses this verb, βαλεῖν.

[93] Generally one per cent a month, or twelve per cent a year. (See Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 463.)

[94] In connection with Matt. 8: 12, and 13: 12, we have already explained the words "exterior darkness," and the proverb "He that hath, to him shall be given."

for that very purpose. The neglect deserved punishment, for God does not wish that the various gifts which He so generously bestows upon men should remain barren. Those who do not zealously make use of His graces in His service are guilty of ingratitude, which He has a right to punish severely.

Many details of this parable of the talents, as also certain former sayings of Christ, suggest another important remark. The master of the three servants goes to a far-off country, and does not return until "after a long time." [95] In the parable of the ten virgins, the bridegroom, who represents Christ, delays his coming until the middle of the night. These details and others like them,[96] conclusively prove that our Lord never said that He would return soon.

We should also note that, notwithstanding the contrary view of many early and contemporary commentators, the last of the four parables, that of the talents, cannot be considered as a duplicate of the parable of the pounds, which we have already seen and studied in the Third Gospel.[97] Between these two parables there are, indeed, resemblances; but there are likewise considerable differences, in time, place, and other important features. In the former case, our Lord was at Jericho, eight or ten days before His death, and He was addressing a mixed audience; in the latter case, He was sitting at the top of the Mount of Olives, and had about Him only four of His Apostles. As regards the subject-matter, St. Luke speaks of *minae,* St. Matthew of talents; St. Luke speaks of a nobleman who goes afar to receive a crown, although he is detested by his countrymen, whereas St. Matthew shows us simply a landowner who is making a business journey. In the former parable, the *minae* are distributed

[95] Matt. 25: 19. In the Greek: μετὰ πολὺν χρόνον (Vulg., *post multum temporis*).

[96] Cf. Matt. 24: 8: "All these are the beginnings of sorrows"; 24: 14: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world . . . ," etc.

[97] Luke 19: 12–27. See *supra,* pages 214–217.

equally to the servants; in the latter case the servants receive unequal amounts of money. The rewards and the punishments also differ in the two accounts. Furthermore, it was natural that our Lord should, on different occasions, impart the same teaching by use of the same figures. There seems to us to be no sound reason for identifying the two parables, especially since such an identification would presuppose a confusion on the part of the Evangelists, which is hardly admissible.

The Savior's eschatological discourse closes with a magnificent description of the last judgment.[98] After briefly foretelling His return as supreme Judge,[99] and then at considerable length exhorting all to the practice of vigilance, the Son of Man reverts to the subject of that great event. In simple and majestic language, He sketches the picture of the general judgment, which will close the present era, and after which there will be only a blessed or unhappy eternity. In the description we see Christ as the supreme Judge, the blessed, and the reprobates. We hear the twofold irrevocable sentence, and the dialogue on this subject between the Messias and those admitted to Heaven or cast into hell:

"When the Son of Man shall come in His majesty, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the seat of His majesty. And all nations shall be gathered together before Him, and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left." [100]

Some time before, the Savior announced that He would come again and reign.[101] That glorious return is here depicted as if already accomplished. Christ is upon His throne, surrounded by thousands of angels. All the generations of man-

[98] Matt. 25: 31–46.
[99] Matt. 24: 30–31.
[100] Matt. 25: 31–33.
[101] Matt. 16: 28.

kind that have dwelt upon the earth since the creation of Adam and Eve, answer the summons reëchoing in every corner of the globe, and stand in vast numbers before their Judge, anxiously expecting their sentence. An act of Christ's almighty power separates them into two opposite groups, not by race or country, for all nationality will then disappear, but into the good and the wicked, the saved and the damned.

This terrible scene is represented by a comparison taken from the pastoral life of the East. In Bible lands, the sheep are usually white. In the present text they are a figure of the good, because among all races they symbolize meekness, docility, and innocence. Goats, which are generally black in Palestine, are the emblem of the wicked. The elect are placed on the right of the Son of Man, that is, on the side which has ever been considered the place of honor, the side of blessing and happiness.[102] The damned are relegated to the left, the evil side,[103] the very name of which was considered as a sinister omen among the Greeks. To better explain the comparison, we may add that, in Oriental countries, although sheep and goats often form a single flock during the day, they are separated at night and are placed in separate stables or enclosures.[104]

The sentence is then pronounced, first for the good:

"Then shall the King say to them that shall be on His right hand: Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in; naked, and you covered Me; sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me. Then shall the just answer Him, saying: Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, and fed Thee; thirsty, and gave Thee drink? And

[102] Cf. Gen. 48:17; Ps. 109:1, etc.
[103] Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, 540–543.
[104] Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible*, p. 89.

will satisfy man's heart and leave him nothing further to desire, the wicked and unrepentant will hear the final 'Go, Depart . . .' We cannot too often reflect upon these words, 'Come, Go . . .' Do thou, my soul, weigh these words which embrace all goodness and all evil, the whole notion of both: 'Come, Go.' Come to Me, where you will find all goodness; Depart far from Me, whither there is all evil." [110] After this separation from God, this pain of "damnation," as it is called in theology, comes the pain of the senses, the chief agency of which will be fire, which will eternally torture the reprobate sinners. But let us remark a delicate *nuance* in the final declaration of the two decrees. Christ says that the kingdom was prepared expressly for the good. In the case of the wicked, He merely declares that hell was prepared for Satan and his angels. It was, therefore, the sins of devils and the sins of men that created hell; God is not its author in a positive sense.

The reasons are given for the decree of damnation as for the decree of blessedness, and in the same manner. The omission of the most elementary practices of Christian charity can become the occasion of an eternal wretchedness, just as the endless blessedness of Heaven may be got by practicing that charity. Whosoever deliberately neglects the works of mercy, thereby proves that he does not love his brethren, nor God either, and he is certain to fall into every kind of sin. When the damned plead ignorance, the Messias will refuse to accept that vain excuse.

What gentle and terrible majesty there is in the epilogue: "These [the damned] shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just, into life everlasting." These two decrees are then carried out; the veil falls, and the twofold eternity begins, since the decision is final.

[110] Bossuet, *Méditations sur l'Évangile*, Last week, 93d and 97th day.

CHAPTER III

The Preliminaries of the Passion

"We must now sprinkle our book with blood and cover our hand with scarlet, because we are about to relate the martyrdom of Christ." With these words an early writer [111] began the history of the Passion. But it will be still better for us to fill our hearts with love for Him who so generously saved us by His cruel and ignominious death. Speaking of this same mystery, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews [112] wrote that "it became Him" to suffer so that He might redeem us. The Savior repeated more than once that it was a necessity, because of God's eternal designs: "He must," "Ought Christ not . . . ?" [113] There is but a delicate *nuance* between the Savior's words and those of the Apostle. In each case the words take the point of view of the divine plan; but St. Paul does not venture to say that the Savior's execution was strictly necessary.

From this point onward the Gospel narratives furnish us with an abundance of details about the sorrowful and tragic events that form the central point around which the entire history of the world turns. Thus far we have rarely seen the four biographies of the Savior relate the same event in concert; but we shall now frequently find their accounts parallel. None of them could pass over in silence events of such gravity and of such concern for the Christian reader.[114]

[111] Pseudo-Jerome, in the *Catena* of St. Thomas Aquinas, *h. l.*

[112] Heb. 2:10.

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[114] The commentators of the Gospels also treat these last days of our Lord's life with greater fullness. Special monographs have been written on the Passion;

will satisfy man's heart and leave him nothing further to desire, the wicked and unrepentant will hear the final 'Go, Depart . . .' We cannot too often reflect upon these words, 'Come, Go . . .' Do thou, my soul, weigh these words which embrace all goodness and all evil, the whole notion of both: 'Come, Go.' Come to Me, where you will find all goodness; Depart far from Me, whither there is all evil." [110] After this separation from God, this pain of "damnation," as it is called in theology, comes the pain of the senses, the chief agency of which will be fire, which will eternally torture the reprobate sinners. But let us remark a delicate *nuance* in the final declaration of the two decrees. Christ says that the kingdom was prepared expressly for the good. In the case of the wicked, He merely declares that hell was prepared for Satan and his angels. It was, therefore, the sins of devils and the sins of men that created hell; God is not its author in a positive sense.

The reasons are given for the decree of damnation as for the decree of blessedness, and in the same manner. The omission of the most elementary practices of Christian charity can become the occasion of an eternal wretchedness, just as the endless blessedness of Heaven may be got by practicing that charity. Whosoever deliberately neglects the works of mercy, thereby proves that he does not love his brethren, nor God either, and he is certain to fall into every kind of sin. When the damned plead ignorance, the Messias will refuse to accept that vain excuse.

What gentle and terrible majesty there is in the epilogue: "These [the damned] shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just, into life everlasting." These two decrees are then carried out; the veil falls, and the twofold eternity begins, since the decision is final.

[110] Bossuet, *Méditations sur l'Évangile*, Last week, 93d and 97th day.

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I. The Sanhedrin's Plot and Judas' Infamous Pact

The Sanhedrin's conspiracy and the agreement entered into by Judas are a fitting prelude to the drama of the Passion.

On Tuesday evening of Holy Week, perhaps on the road to Bethania, or after reaching there, the Savior plainly announced to His Apostles the near fulfilment of the prophecies which He had so often made to them about His death, sometimes in figurative language, sometimes literally. He said: "You know that after two days shall be the Pasch, and the Son of Man shall be delivered up to be crucified." [115] The Paschal festival started on the evening of the 14th Nisan, the Jewish month that began at the March new moon and ended at the April new moon. The Pasch lasted eight full days, until the evening of the twenty-second.[116] It was, therefore, on the 12th Nisan that our Lord imparted this news to His Apostles. He wished that the sudden outburst of the catastrophe should not take them too much unawares.

The usual meeting place of the Sanhedrin was located in one of the outer premises of the Temple, on its western side,[117] and called *gazzith,* or hall of the cut stone. But on that day,[118]

in these works its smallest details have been studied, with the aid of whatever light has been shed on the subject by sacred and profane archaeology. We mention a few of these special works: Bynaeus, *De Morte Jesu Christi,* 1691–1698; Friedlieb, *Archäologie der Leidensgeschichte,* 1842; Langen, *Die letzten Lebenstage Jesu, ein biblisch-historischer Versuch,* 1864; Nebe, *Die Leidensgeschichte unseres Herrn Jesu Christi nach den vier Evangelien ausgelegt,* 1881; Belser, *Die Geschichte des Leidens und Sterbens, der Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt des Herrn nach den vier Evangelien ausgelegt,* 2d ed. 1913. (English tr. by Marks-Preuss, *History of the Passion,* St. Louis, Herder, 1929.)

[115] Matt. 26: 1 f.

[116] There is good reason to suppose that the expression μετὰ δύο ἡμέρας (Vulg., *post biduum*), which St. Matthew and St. Mark used in this passage, has the same meaning as our expression "the day after to-morrow." It is not correct to understand it as meaning "to-morrow," or "the next day."

[117] Josephus, *Bell. Iud.,* V, iv, 2.

[118] St. Matthew indicates a close connection between these two events.

in consequence of a providential coincidence, the three classes of the Sanhedrin (chief priests, Scribes, and ancients or notables), or at least the most influential members, assembled in the palace of the High Priest Caiphas. This circumstance favors the view that the meeting was neither plenary nor official. We have already had occasion to note the Sanhedrin's activity against Christ. Caiphas, who was both supreme pontiff and president of the Great Council, had shown, after the raising of Lazarus and the increase of influence which that event drew to the Savior, a feeling of implacable hatred.[119] What, then, can we expect from this new deliberation of Israel's leaders except a confirmation of the plan formulated long since and definitely agreed upon of late, to bring about His death as soon as possible? During a considerable part of our Lord's public life, the Scribes and Pharisees were His principal enemies. The Sadducees, who filled nearly all the higher offices in the sacerdotal caste, generally held themselves aloof. But the Savior's triumphal entry, the discourses, provocative in a way, which He continued to deliver in the sacred courts of the Temple, within a domain which they considered exclusively their own, and particularly the driving-out of the sellers, had deeply angered and irritated them. Therefore they gladly joined with the other hostile parties to demand prompt vengeance.

Although, in the case of most members of the Sanhedrin, hatred had reached the highest degree, yet they understood the need of acting against Jesus with prudence, secretly, and without too great haste. The essential thing was to seize Him; it would then be easy to rid themselves of Him, either juridically, by a formal condemnation, or, if need be, by the knife of an assassin. But He must be arrested clandestinely, in such a way as to avoid a gathering of people that might easily lead to a serious outbreak. Such a policy was prompted

[119] John 11 : 47–53.

by the fact that Christ's followers were numerous among the pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the Paschal festival, and there was reason to fear especially His disciples from Galilee, whose attachment to Him was deep and enthusiastic. Josephus mentions how easily the Jewish crowds were aroused at the time of the religious festivals.[120] The Roman governors were not unaware of this fact and consequently took precautions. At the time of the Pasch,[121] they strengthened the garrison quartered in the Antonia tower, northeast of the Temple, and usually they left their official residence at Caesarea and came to Jerusalem for a few days, so that they might keep a close eye upon the movements of the populace. For this reason, according to St. Luke, the counsellors met at the house of Caiphas; they were in agreement as to the fact of the arrest and only "sought how" [122] to effect it. At length they came to an accord in the matter. It was decided that they would resort to trickery to seize Jesus and that they would wait until the close of the Paschal octave [123] to lay hands on Him, because at that time most of the pilgrims, both Palestinians and those from abroad, would leave Jerusalem; the danger of an uprising would then have largely disappeared.[124]

Let us note this contrast which stands out in St. Matthew's narrative: Christ knows the day and the hour of His death; His enemies, although determined upon His death, are hesitant and ignorant as to when they will be able to arrest Him so as to satisfy their grim hatred. After a feverish deliberation, they decide that "not on the festival day," will they make the arrest. And yet, according to the most probable opinion,[125]

[120] *Bell. Iud.*, I, iv, 3; II, i, 3; iii, 1; xii, 1; IV, vii, 2.

[121] Josephus, *Bell. Iud.*, II, x, 1; xii, 6; xiv, 3.

[122] Ἐζήτουν . . . τὸ πῶς (Vulg., *quaerebant . . . quomodo*).

[123] The Greek words ἐν ἑορτῇ refer to the entire period of the Paschal feast, the whole octave, not merely the first day, as the Vulgate seems to say (*in die festo*).

[124] Matt. 26:1–5; Mark 14:1 f.; Luke 22:1 f.

[125] The question will be discussed *infra*.

it was in the first hours of the Paschal festival, on the principal day of the solemnity, when Jerusalem was crowded with pilgrims, that Jesus was arrested, condemned to death, and nailed to the cross. Why this sudden change of plan? Because, shortly after the decision taken at Caiphas' house, an event of extraordinary consequence, which was far from being even suspected, suddenly modified the plan of the Sanhedrists.

He who would now lend his shameful help for an abominable undertaking, was worthy of them; even viler was his soul. He was one of the twelve Apostles, Judas Iscariot, "Judas the traitor," as he is called the first time his name appears.[126] The very evening of the Sanhedrin's meeting—for St. Matthew closely connects the two events—Judas went to the chief priests and made this brazen and shameless proposal to them: "What will you give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?" [127] Apropos of the calling of the Apostles,[128] we endeavored to analyse the motives that might have prompted Judas ("one of the Twelve," as the three Synoptics remark with sad emphasis) thus to betray so good a master. We saw that, although the problem may have been complex, the chief motive was a sordid avarice, supplemented by disappointed pride, by a mistaken ambition, and also, perhaps, by a desire to escape from a danger that he thought imminent. The Evangelists allow no doubt about it,[129] and this same judgment regarding Judas is that of the earliest ecclesiastical writers.[130] As St. John informs us,[131] the traitor's

[126] Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:19; Luke 6:16; cf. John 6:72.

[127] Matt. 26:14–16; Mark 14:10 f.; Luke 22:3–6.

[128] Volume II, pp. 264–266

[129] See, in addition to the present episode, John 12:6.

[130] *E. g.*, Origen, *Cont. Cels.*, II, 11; *Comment. in Matth.*, ser. 75 and 78. See also St. Augustine, *De Consensu Evangel.*, III, 4; St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Matth.*, 88, *h. l.*, etc.

[131] John 6:71 f.

sinister plans went back to an earlier date; but only by degrees did his soul reach this excess of infamy. By way of stigmatizing his crime, St. Luke says at this point that, before the traitor decided to go to the chief priests, "Satan entered into Judas," and St. John, a little later on, uses a similar expression: "The devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot . . . to betray Him." [132] These words do not mean a diabolical possession, strictly speaking; they are rather a forceful way of saying that in Judas' conduct there was a Satanic malice, worthy of the prince of devils and developed under his influence.

The traitor went to the right persons with his proposal, for the chief priests had much greater authority and facilities than anyone else for carrying this dark business to a successful issue. St. Mark and St. Luke remark that the chief priests, after hearing Judas' offer, "were glad." In fact, they could hardly have expected such a proposal, especially from one of the Savior's intimate disciples. Just when, following the meeting at Caiphas' house, they are greatly disturbed as to the outcome of their undertaking against Jesus, there comes one of His habitual companions, a witness of all His movements, and of his own accord offers to deliver Him up to them. They must have entertained an exaggerated idea of the popular attachment to Jesus and consequently of the difficulties in the way of arresting Him. Evidently the Apostles will not place themselves at the head of His followers, Galilean or otherwise, to proclaim Him the Messias-King, or, if they do so, they will meet with a lively resistance, because there could be no doubt but that Judas was relying upon a considerable party. The Sanhedrin, then, will have a safe opportunity to accomplish their purpose. Since conditions were so altered, of what use would it be to wait for the close of the festival before arresting Jesus? On the contrary, they

[132] Luke 22:3; John 13:2.

will take advantage of the first opportune moment, that Judas will point out. In this way the plan which had just been formed was completely changed and, after they had dreaded a popular uprising that might become dangerous in many respects, they now find that they can lay hands on Christ in the very midst of the festival.

After a short discussion, the shameful bargain was concluded on this basis: Judas, profiting by his knowledge of his Master's movements, of the places to which He withdrew to spend the night as a measure of prudence, the names of His principal friends, agrees to deliver Him up at the first opportunity in the manner so much desired, without there being any crowd present;[133] the religious leaders, on the other hand, promise the traitor the sum of thirty silver shekels, about seventeen dollars in our money.[134] We do not know just when this money was handed over to Judas. It seems probable that it was not done until Thursday night, immediately after the Savior's arrest at Gethsemani. The smallness of the amount, even though it were worth ten or twenty times as much as it would be to-day, does but emphasize the grossness of the outrage. Cupidity, once it is aroused in a sordid soul, soon comes to be satisfied with small amounts. And further on, St. Matthew tells us that, if God allowed precisely the sum of thirty shekels to be offered to Judas as pay for his treason, this was to fulfil an ancient prophecy.[135] St. Luke notes that the leaders of the Levitical police, whose duty it was to keep order in the Temple, were present at the shameful bargaining between the chief priests

[133] St. Mark: *εὐκαίρως* (Vulg., *opportune*); St. Luke is more explicit: *ἄτερ ὄχλου* (Vulg., *sine turbis*), "in the absence of the multitude."

[134] The shekel was worth about 56 cents. As regards this detail, we prefer to adopt the reading of St. Mark *ἐπηγγείλαντο* (Vulg., *promiserunt*) and of St. Luke *συνεθέντο*, (Vulg., *pacti sunt*). St. Matthew condenses and speaks as though the thirty shekels were at once given to the traitor (*ἔστησαν*: literally, "they weighed").

[135] Matt. *27*: 9.

and the traitor. It was natural that they should be consulted in this case, because they were better able than anyone else to observe the people's state of mind and to know what difficulties would be presented by the proposed arrest.[136]

The three Synoptics close their account of Judas' agreement by saying that from this moment the traitor lay in wait, watching for a favorable opportunity to deliver Jesus into the hands of His worst enemies.

II. Preparations for the Paschal Supper; Date of its Celebration

Wednesday of Holy Week seems to be passed over in silence by the four Evangelists, at least according to the chronological scheme which appears most likely. Everything inclines us to suppose that our Lord spent that day in His retreat at Bethania, praying, preparing Himself for His Passion and death, and also conversing with His Apostles and friends, from whom He would be separated on the morrow. As no extraordinary incident marked the day, the sacred writers have taken no account of it, but bring us directly to the early hours of Holy Thursday. After the first three days of the week, during which He exercised so abundant a ministry and sustained such rude combat, the Divine Master wished to recollect Himself so as to take new strength for the terrible conflict that He must engage in.

The preparation for the Paschal festival is recounted by the three Synoptics.[137] Early Thursday morning, "the first day of the unleavened bread," when the Jews immolated and ate

[136] In the Greek: *τοῖς στρατηγοῖς* (Vulg., *magistratibus*). There was, in fact, only one "captain of the Temple." But under his command were subordinate officers, who were summoned along with him.

[137] Matt. 26:17–20; Mark 14:12–17; Luke 22:7–14. St. Matthew gives us a brief sketch. St. Mark and St. Luke are in close agreement and are more complete.

the Paschal lamb, as St. Mark and St. Luke state, the Apostles asked the Divine Master: "Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the pasch?" There was no time to lose if everything was to be made ready for the hour prescribed for the legal repast. First of all, they must be sure of a room; this might not be an easy matter to arrange, because of the great number of pilgrims at Jerusalem. By way of forestalling this difficulty, the Savior said to Peter and John: "Go ye into the city; and there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water; follow him. And whithersoever he shall go in, say to the master of the house: The Master saith: Where is My refectory, where I may eat the pasch with My disciples? And he will show you a large dining-room furnished; and there prepare ye for us."

This was a confidential mission; therefore Jesus entrusted it to His two closest disciples. "To eat the pasch" is an expression again and again used by the Apostles and by our Lord. It was a technical phrase among the Jews, designating the solemn meal by which the Paschal festival was begun, a meal at which the Paschal lamb formed the essential dish, according to a divine command going back to the remote time of the flight from Egypt.[138] Another equally essential dish was the "azyme," *i. e.,* unleavened [139] bread, the use of which was obligatory throughout the whole festival, from the evening of the 14th Nisan to the evening of the 22d, likewise in remembrance of what took place when God delivered His people from the yoke of the Egyptians.[140] The Jews still rigorously obey this latter prescription. They have had to forego the Paschal lamb, since they can no longer immolate it in the Temple; but, so far as concerns the unleavened bread, they have ever remained faithful, even to the point of scrupulosity.

[138] Ex. 12:3–6; Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:3, 5, 11, etc.
[139] From the Greek ἄζυμος. The Hebrew noun is *matsot,* in the plural.
[140] Ex. 12:15–20, 39; 13:3–7.

On the evening of 13th Nisan, or at the latest on the next morning, in every family there was a most careful search for whatever leavened bread might still be on hand, and this was burned up, to the smallest crumbs.[141]

We may wonder why our Lord resorted to so mysterious a means of disclosing to His two messengers the house where He wished to celebrate the Paschal supper. The answer to this question is easy. Christ acted thus so that Judas would not know the place until the last moment. Had he known it beforehand, he would not have failed to inform the chief priests in the course of the day, and they would have taken advantage of so excellent an opportunity, because they could have arrested Jesus quietly in the house whither He betook Himself that evening. But Christ was unwilling to be disturbed by His enemies before His "hour" had come, and especially before making His legacy to His Church in the form of the Holy Eucharist. His method, therefore, was a measure of prudence, perfectly justified. Thanks to this precaution, the traitor does not know at what house Christ will eat the pasch with His Apostles, until he enters it that evening, and he is able to carry out his vile project only at the end of the legal repast.[142]

We quoted the Savior's instructions to His two messengers according to the Second and Third Gospel. St. Matthew's account has a notable variant at this point, where it reports Jesus as saying: "Go ye into the city to a certain man [143] and say to him: The Master saith: My time is near at hand; with thee I make the Pasch with My disciples." Everyone agrees that our Lord did not use the expression "to a certain man," which would have had no meaning under the cir-

[141] The Mishna, tractate *Pesashim*, I, 1; Créhange, *La Haggada ou Cérémonies Religieuses des Israëlites pendant les Premiers Jours de la Pâque*, p. 1; Coypel, *Le Judaïsme, Esquisse de Mœurs Juives*, p. 233.

[142] Cf. John 13:23–30.

[143] Πρὸς τὸν δεῖνα (Vulg., *ad quemdam*).

cumstances. Furthermore, it seems certain that He did not mention anyone by name, because, as we learn from the two other Synoptics, He gave Peter and John a special sign by which they could easily reach the house of the man who would give them a room for the celebration of the supper. But St. Matthew, who frequently abridges, condenses the Savior's instructions, by saying: "Go to a certain man." He thus preserves the spirit of those instructions, since they remain partly mysterious.

It has sometimes been surmised that there was a previous understanding between Christ and the owner of the house and that the latter, following the Master's directions, sent ahead, on the road that would be taken by Peter and John, a servant carrying a pitcher. But this is not likely; the accounts as a whole rather incline us to suppose that the Savior's very exact directions came from His supernatural knowledge. We saw a similar illustration in the case of the ass and the colt, on the day of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem.[144] He whom Christ honored by inviting Himself to his house for the Pasch with His Apostles, was very likely not a stranger, but rather a disciple and friend. This fact seems to follow from the words, "The Master saith," and from the remark, "My time is near," which a stranger would not have comprehended. This remark clearly means: I am soon to die; and it contains an urgent reason for granting Jesus the favor He asks. Moreover, at the time of the Paschal festival, all inhabitants of Jerusalem practiced the greatest hospitality towards pilgrims coming from afar. It was entirely gratuitous; but, following an ancient custom, to the householder was left the hide of the Paschal lamb as a sort of recompense.[145] It was proverbial among the Jews that never did anyone have to

[144] See *supra*, pages 236 ff.
[145] *Bab. Joma*, 12, b; *Megilloth*, 26, 1.

complain that he could not find a room in the Holy City where he might eat the pasch.

Having received the Savior's orders, Peter and John left Bethania on Holy Thursday morning and hastily betook themselves to Jerusalem. They easily found the house, since everything occurred as Christ had foretold. The servant carrying a pitcher had probably gone for water to the pool of Siloe, located outside the walls, to the southeast. As he entered the city by one of the gates, he was on the road of the two Apostles coming from Bethania. The Apostles had merely to follow him in order to reach the house which Jesus had in mind. The master of the house welcomed them and placed at their disposal a fine, large room, provided with rugs and couches, all ready for the meal, exactly as Christ had described it, and worthy of the great things that were going to happen there. It was a "high room," [146] built on the roof of the house, where Jesus could converse with His disciples in perfect tranquillity.

At the present time the Cenacle is venerated at the top of Mount Sion, outside Jerusalem, about 400 feet from a gate that bears the same name as the hill, in the midst of a group of houses which the Mohammedans call Nebi Daud ("the prophet David") because they believe they have there the tomb of the great king. The Cenacle is a rather large hall, "forming an oblong 45 feet by 30 feet, divided lengthwise into two naves. The ogive arches of the vaulted ceiling and the capitals with carved foliage point to a late period of Gothic architecture. This room is lighted by three windows facing south." [147] The construction dates from the middle of the fourteenth century. But a sound tradition, going back to the beginning of the second century, guarantees the au-

[146] St. Mark and St. Luke: ἀνάγαιον (Vulg., *coenaculum*, whence our word "cenacle").

[147] *La Palestine*, by Professors of Notre-Dame de France à Jérusalem, 2d ed., p. 150.

thenticity of the site.[148] Few places exist so precious to Christians, since the Cenacle where Jesus celebrated His last Pasch and instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist, was doubtless the same room where He appeared four days later to His Apostles after His Resurrection and where the disciples, to the number of one hundred and twenty, gathered after the Ascension to prepare themselves for the coming of the Holy Ghost.[149]

Certitude becomes simple conjecture when we attempt to determine who was the owner of the Cenacle. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea have been mentioned, but for no reason except their high station. With more likelihood, a comparison has been made between this episode and a dramatic passage in the Acts of the Apostles.[150] This passage shows us St. Peter a few years later, after he left the prison where he had been put by Herod Agrippa I, knocking at the door of a house belonging to Mary, the mother of John Mark, the future Evangelist;[151] this house was a meeting place for the Christians of Jerusalem. Did it contain the Cenacle where Jesus celebrated the Pasch? The supposition is interesting and somewhat favored by certain modern theologians and exegetes;[152] yet it is only a hypothesis.

Let us return to the Savior's two messengers. It was not enough that they should find the house where the Pasch was

[148] See Vigouroux, *Dictionnaire de la Bible,* Vol. II, cols. 399–403; *La Palestine,* pp. 147–150; Chauvet and Isambert, *Syrie, Palestine,* p. 322. The tradition is so well proved that many Protestant authors, ordinarily hard to convince in such cases, accept it. See, for example, Sanday, *Sacred Sites of the Gospels,* p. 77; Zahn, *Die Dormitio Sanctae Virginis und das Haus des Johannes Marcus;* Plummer, *St. Matthew,* p. 358.

[149] Luke 24:36–49; John 20:19–29; Acts 1:13; 2:1–4.

[150] Acts 12:12–17.

[151] His father must have died before the time of this episode.

[152] Cf. Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus,* II, 485. Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus,* p. 683, considers the fact "very likely," and refers to the short work cited above, *Die Dormitio.* This hypothesis was suggested by a monk of Cyprus, named Alexander, about the middle of the sixth century.

to be celebrated and to ascertain that the room placed at the Savior's disposal contained all the required furniture. They must hasten to prepare the various articles of food prescribed by law and custom for this sacred repast. We have already referred to the *matsot* or unleavened bread. This was in the form of flat biscuits, about 10 inches in diameter and only a fraction of an inch thick. They were of whitish color, with here and there a few brown spots, caused by the baking. The surface was covered by little stamped wrinkles. They were made of flour mixed with water, and were baked on trays. The heat hardened them while baking. They tasted very flat.[153] The two Apostles had to get also the bitter herbs (lettuce, parsley, cress, horse-radish, etc.) which are spoken of at the time of the first institution of the Pasch,[154] and the thick reddish sauce, called *haroset* in Hebrew, composed of a mixture of dry fruits (dates, almonds, figs, grapes) mashed and thickened with a dash of vinegar. These two dishes symbolized the sufferings undergone by the Hebrews in Egypt, and especially (in the case of the *haroset*) the bricks which the ancestors of Israel had to make for their tyrants at the cost of so much suffering.[155] Several other dishes also had to be prepared, to complete the meal, as likewise a sufficient quantity of wine and water.

The essential dish was the Paschal lamb, a one-year old male lamb without blemish, which was immolated in the afternoon, according to a special rite.[156] By way of exception, and doubtless because of an insufficient number of priests for this task, the slaying of the lambs was not reserved to the priests,

[153] See Coypel, *Le Judaïsme*, p. 233, from whose account we take this description of the azyme bread of today, which probably does not greatly differ from that used in our Lord's time.

[154] Ex. 12:8.

[155] Ex. 1:11–14, etc.

[156] The details are recorded in the Mishna, *Pesashim*, V, 6–8. See Edersheim, *The Temple and its Services*, pp. 199–204; *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 487.

but the heads of families or their delegates were authorized on that day to perform this duty themselves. They were divided into three groups, which followed one another between three and five o'clock in the Priests' Court, before the sanctuary, or *naos,* not far from the altar of holocausts. At a signal given by the priestly trumpets, each one slew his lamb. "Priests standing in two lines caught the blood of the victims in golden or silver basins, which were passed from one to another until they were received by him who was nearest the altar. He emptied the vessels at the foot of the altar and returned them to the sacrificers in the same way as they had come. The lambs were then cut into pieces, but with the greatest care, because no bone must be broken.[157] The fat was put aside, to be burned on the altar of holocausts. When these various ceremonies had been performed to the accompaniment of the singing of psalms, the lambs were wrapped in their hides and carried to the private houses, where they were roasted in ovens. Two branches of the pomegranate tree, arranged in the form of a cross, held them in a position fixed by custom.[158] Peter and John were engaged in these preparations a great part of Holy Thursday.

We must now briefly consider one of the most complex and disputed questions of Gospel history. It is a question which we can never hope to see solved with complete satisfaction, since, after centuries of discussion, the solution seems scarcely to have progressed at all, and still divides commentators into two opposite camps. The question is to determine the exact date when our Lord celebrated the supper recounted by all four Evangelists, and also the date of His crucifixion. It is not the day of the week that is in doubt, for the biographers of Christ are at one in saying that the meal which He took with His Apostles was eaten on Thursday evening,

[157] Ex. 12:46.
[158] Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Matthieu,* p. 503.

and that He died on the next day, Friday. The difficulty is about the date of the month; on this point the sacred writers seem to be divided.

If we had only the report of the Synoptics, the question would not arise, for it is quite certain that, according to them, the Savior celebrated the Paschal supper on the day and at the hour fixed by the Law, namely, the evening of 14th Nisan, when the festival of the Pasch officially began. They say explicitly that "on the first day of the unleavened bread," on the 14th, the day "when they [the Jews] sacrificed the pasch," the disciples asked the Master: "Whither wilt Thou that we go, and prepare for Thee to eat the pasch?" [159] We are then told that two Apostles were at once designated by the Savior to go and prepare the pasch [160] and that, "when evening was come," He sat at table with the Twelve, to eat the meal thus prepared.[161] St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke could not have employed clearer and more precise expressions to designate the Paschal meal. The mere use of the popular and technical phrase "to eat the pasch" would be enough to remove any doubt on this point. It is true that they make no mention of the Paschal lamb; but that detail was useless, because no one was ignorant of the fact that it was the essential dish of the supper of the 14th Nisan. Because of its clearness and unanimity, this testimony of the Synoptics is certainly of great weight.

Upon passing to the Fourth Gospel, we find ourselves at once in the presence of serious difficulties; it is equally certain that, if this Gospel had been the only one to relate the matters we are now considering, it would be difficult for us to think that Christ really "ate the pasch" and celebrated the Paschal festival with His fellow-Jews on the evening of 14th Nisan.

[159] Matt. 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7.
[160] Matt. 26:18 f.; Mark 14:13–16; Luke 22:10–13.
[161] Matt. 26:20; Mark 14:17; Luke 22:14.

It speaks of a meal which our Lord took with His Apostles on the eve of His death; but it remarks that this meal took place "before the festival day of the Pasch." [162] Further on it tells us that the Jews who violently brought Christ to Pilate's house for the confirmation of the death sentence, did not go into the pretorium because they feared to become legally defiled and thereby prevented from "eating the pasch."[163] Still further on,[164] St. John calls the day of our Lord's crucifixion "the parasceve [preparation] of the Pasch";[165] this would lead us to suppose that the day was not the 15th Nisan, as the Synoptics say, but the 14th; whence it would follow that Christ died before He could have celebrated the legal repast.

How are these dates to be reconciled? We can, of course, be sure that there is no contradiction, since "one and the same Holy Spirit speaks through all the Evangelists," as was said by an early Greek writer treating this question.[166] The whole problem is to find a reasonable and sound manner of establishing accord. Two chief systems of reconciliation have been formed among Christian exegetes for attaining this end.[167] One group, favoring St. John's narrative, endeavor to interpret the Synoptics in accord with that account: the four Evangelists, they say, agree in fixing the date of the Last Supper on the 13th Nisan, and the date of the crucifixion on the 14th. The other group, relying upon the Synoptics, try to explain the chronological data of the Fourth Gospel at

[162] John 13:1.

[163] John 18:28.

[164] John 19:14.

[165] Παρασκεύη τοῦ Πάσχα (Vulg., *parasceve Paschae*).

[166] Philoponus, *De Pasch. Disputat.*, in Galland's *Bibliotheca Vet. Patrum*, XII, 605.

[167] We do not here take into account the views of the Rationalists. They maintain that, in the present case, we have a flagrant and irreconcilable contradiction between the Evangelists. It "does not bother them," says E. Reuss (*Histoire Évangélique*, p. 628); or rather, they turn it to their advantage, because upon it they base their attack on the truth of the accounts.

this point according to the data supplied by the Synoptics, which they consider as clearer and as furnishing a more solid basis. We will sketch only the broad outlines of these two theories, each of which has learned and zealous defenders.[168]

In sum, according to the view of those favoring the first theory, our Lord anticipated the celebration of the Paschal meal by eating it on the evening of 13th Nisan, because He knew that He would die on the following day; or else the supper spoken of by the Synoptics was simply a farewell supper and not the ritualistic meal. But, since it is a question of harmonizing the Synoptics with St. John, evidently this means does not succeed, because the first three Evangelists explicitly mention the first day of the unleavened bread, and the preparations made by Christ's two disciples for the Pasch. In either hypothesis, how could the Savior say that He ardently desired "to eat this pasch" with His disciples before dying? [169] And what proof have we of an anticipation of the ritualistic repast by our Lord? It is an altogether gratuitous conjecture.

In the same sense, other hypotheses have been construed, but they are also gratuitous. For instance, it is said that the Galileans often celebrated the Paschal supper on the 13th Nisan. But this is not true; the only exceptional thing about

[168] We will here mention a few works, many of them containing bibliographies on the subject: Bynaeus, *De Morte J. C.*, Vol. I, chap. 3, sec. 19–32; B. Lamy, *Traité Historique de l'Ancienne Pâque des Juifs, où l'on examine à Fond la Question si J.-C. fit cette Pâque la Veille de sa Mort*, 1663; Calmet, *Dissertation sur la Dernière Pâque de N.-S. Jésus-Christ* (at the beginning of his *Comment. sur l'Évangile de S. Matthieu*); Tillemont, *Mémoires pour Servir à l'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, II, 3, 150–160; Langen, *Die letzten Lebenstage Jesu*, pp. 57–146; Andrews, *Life of Our Lord*, pp. 423–460; Wieseler, *Chronologische Synopse der vier Evangelien*, pp. 333–390, and *Beiträge zur richtigen Würdigung der Evangelien*, pp. 230–283; J. Schmid, *Der Monatstag des Abendmahls und Todes unseres Herrn Jesus Christus;* J. Bach, *Monatstag und Jahr des Todes Christi;* Chwolson, *Das letzte Passamahl Christi.* See also the principal Dictionaries of the Bible, under the word "Chronology."

[169] Luke 22: 15.

the Galilean celebration of the Pasch was that all of the 14th Nisan was observed as a day of rest, whereas at Jerusalem work was permitted until mid-day. Very often the protagonists of these conjectures forget that, without a Paschal lamb, it would be impossible to have a genuine Paschal feast. This fact alone is opposed to the idea of an anticipation of that meal by our Lord, because the lamb, which formed the principal dish, could be immolated only in the Temple courts in the afternoon of the 14th Nisan.

From these details we see what service the Synoptics render us by the clearness of their reports, which the exegete must take seriously into account in the solution of the problem. Since these narratives cannot be brought into agreement with the apparent statement of St. John, we may be permitted to explain the data of the Fourth Gospel by theirs. Though not wishing to deny the difficulties of the problem, we believe this can be done. A large number of commentators are of this opinion. At the outset we may note one fact that is quite certain, namely, that the meal which is introduced in St. John's account by the expression "before the festival day of the Pasch" is the same as the meal which St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke place on the evening of the 14th Nisan during which Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist. This is sufficiently proved by two facts that are common to the Synoptic account and to that by St. John: during the meal our Lord denounces his betrayal [170] and foretells Simon Peter's denial.[171] Hence, there is question of one and the same meal.

There still remain, in St. John's account, the difficulties referred to above. Let us consider them one by one and see how they may be disposed of.

First, the expression "before the festival day" does not

[170] Matt. 26:21–26; Mark 14:18–21; Luke 22:21–23; John 13:18–30.
[171] Matt. 26:31–35; Mark 14:27–31; Luke 22:31–34; John 13:36–38.

necessarily designate a date previous to the celebration of the Pasch. Originally [172] there were, so to speak, two distinct Paschal solemnities: that of the 14th Nisan in the evening, when the symbolic lamb was eaten, and that of the great octave, which extended from the 15th to the 22d. We may refer the words "before the festival day" to the particularly solemn day of the 15th Nisan; [173] in this event, the words would designate the 14th Nisan. It is to be noted that, according to St. John,[174] during this meal, which began "the festival day," the Apostles thought that Jesus had sent Judas to make some purchases "for the festival day." The time, therefore, was, as the Synoptics clearly state, the evening of the 14th Nisan.

Secondly, the eating of the pasch, of which the Jews did not wish to be deprived by entering the pretorium and thus being contaminated in the house of pagans, need not mean the eating of the Paschal lamb, which, according to the Synoptics, took place the evening before. "To eat the pasch" might also mean to participate in the various bloody sacrifices which it was customary to offer during the Paschal octave and which were called *haguigah*.[175]

Thirdly, the word "preparation" (*paraskeue* or "parasceve") was then generally regarded and used as a technical name of Friday, because on that day whatever was needed for Saturday was prepared, so as not to violate the Sabbath rest. In this sense St. John again uses the term a little later.[176] St. Matthew also does so, apropos of Friday, the 15th Nisan.[177]

[172] Ex. 12: 1–28.

[173] We have authority for this statement in a text of Josephus (*Ant.*, III, x, 5): "The Paschal festival follows that of the Azymes, on the fifteenth day." St. John, therefore, had a right to regard the two feasts as distinct.

[174] John 13: 29.

[175] Langen, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–117.

[176] John 19: 42: "the parasceve of the Jews," *i. e.*, Saturday.

[177] Matt. 27: 62.

This term passed into the Christian literature of the first centuries, likewise as a designation of Friday.[178] Hence, St. John's expression, "preparation of the Pasch," was equivalent to this other expression, which is much clearer for us, the Friday of the Paschal octave. This understanding of the terms harmonizes St. John with the Synoptics for the date of Christ's death and for that of the Last Supper.

We have still to answer an objection of some weight. If Christ died on the 15th Nisan, the first and greatest day of the Pasch, how are we to explain various acts that seem irreconcilable with the sanctity and repose of that solemn festival day and which, however, according to the four Evangelists, were performed by the Jews? Thus, the Sanhedrin held several meetings and pronounced sentence of death upon our Lord; Jesus was arrested and led from one tribunal to another; Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus buried the Savior's body; the holy women bought spices; the Apostles thought that Christ Himself sent Judas into the city to make some purchases.

We reply that the incompatibility between these acts and the solemnity of the 15th Nisan is less real than has been supposed. In fact, it is certain that the rest prescribed for the festival days was much less strict than the Sabbath repose.[179] The Talmud [180] allows urgent purchases on those days, provided the money is not given the merchants until later. The Mosaic Law [181] permits the preparation of food on the 15th Nisan, although this is forbidden on the Sabbath. Lastly, it was allowed on feast days to adjudge criminal cases; but the judges were not permitted to write out the sentence on that

[178] Tertullian, *De Ieiun.*, 14; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.*, VII, xii, 75; Origen, *Contra Cels.*, VIII, 21, etc.

[179] See Patrizi, *De Evangeliis Libri Tres*, II, 512.

[180] *Hilcoth Jom Tob*, IV, 20. The school of Hillel took a rather broad view of this question.

[181] Ex. 12:16.

day.[182] As to the Savior's burial and that of the two thieves crucified with Him, the preparations were hastened precisely because of the approach of the Sabbath.[183]

In a word, we do not pretend to offer a final solution of this problem which has been a matter of discussion ever since the second century. But it seems that it is in the Synoptic accounts that we must seek the key to the most satisfactory solution. Their language is remarkably precise. According to them, the Savior's last meal with His disciples was the legal supper, such as all Jews celebrated on the evening of 14th Nisan. To make any other meaning out of the Synoptics' expressions, it is necessary to resort to hypotheses that do not accord with the meaning of their words. Several texts of the Fourth Gospel certainly contain difficulties; but they may be reasonably solved without any violence of interpretation, and thus the dates fixed by St. John may be harmonized with those of the first three Evangelists. We maintain, therefore, that Christ celebrated the Pasch and instituted the Holy Eucharist on the evening of the 14th Nisan and that He was crucified on the next day, Friday the 15th Nisan, the solemn day of the Paschal festival.

III. The Last Supper and the Institution of the Eucharist

In the afternoon Jesus left Bethania and, with His Apostles, took the road to Jerusalem, so as to reach the Cenacle a little before the hour when the legal repast should begin.[184] The whole city was in festive array. The streets were filled with joyous, busy people, likewise directing their steps toward the houses where they would eat the Paschal lamb. From this city, which He had so loved and which had constantly resisted

[182] Lightfoot, *Hor. Hebr. et Talmud.*, in Matth. 27:5. On all these points, see Langen, *op. cit.*, pp. 130–133.

[183] Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54.

[184] Matt. 26:20; Mark 14:17; Luke 22:14.

His appeals, our Lord was to come forth on the next day, laden with an infamous cross, going to Calvary to be crucified. But before that, what a gentle and consoling mystery He would celebrate in the midst of His dearest and closest disciples, and what an infinitely precious memorial He would leave to His Church! Probably guided by one of His two messengers who had rejoined Him in the afternoon, He entered the large room, which was well furnished and lighted, and which had been reserved and prepared for Him.

When the priestly trumpets gave forth the usual signal, to announce that the hour had come for beginning the meal, Christ and the Apostles took their places at table, half reclining on the couches arranged in horse-shoe form. It would seem that on that evening no others were at table except the members of the Apostolic College. The Evangelists mention only the latter, whether before or during or after the meal. We may well suppose the Divine Master wished to be alone, on this solemn occasion, with those who eminently represented His Church. Was He not about to add a new office, the priesthood, to that with which He had long since honored them, and did He not have special instructions to give them? [185]

Originally, in conformity with the Law,[186] the Hebrews ate the Paschal lamb standing in the attitude of travelers, with their loins girt and a staff in their hand. But that prescription soon fell into disuse, along with several others that had in mind particularly the "Egyptian Pasch," as the rabbis say.[187] The "perpetual" Pasch no longer had the simple and austere character of ancient times. New regulations had been intro-

[185] In the second century, St. Justin (*Apol.*, I, 66) favored this view in very clear terms: *μόνοις αὐτοῖς*, "they [the Apostles] being alone." There is an ancient legend that Martha and Mary unsuccessfully asked of our Lord permission to be present at the institution of the Eucharist. (Cf. Hilgenfeld, *Nov. Testam. extra canon. receptum*, 2d ed., IV, 118.)

[186] Ex. 12: 11.

[187] *Pesashim*, IX, 5.

duced, especially the rule of celebrating the legal meal, no longer standing up like slaves, but in the posture which the Greeks and Romans adopted in taking their meals.[188] We would like to know exactly the place on the couches occupied by our Lord and by each of the Twelve; but on this point all we can do is to make more or less likely conjectures, in accord with Greco-Roman custom. Further on St. John's account will enable us to fix upon certain details with some probability.

It is rather generally held that it was toward the beginning of the meal, and in connection with the seating at table, that a rivalry of vanity took place among the Apostles.[189] It was especially untimely at such a moment. Not without bitter jealousy they questioned which of them was the greatest. And that was not the first time they had shown themselves punctilious on this point of honor. More than once[190] the sacred writers candidly record scenes of this sort, which, however, seem less odious than on the occasion of the Last Supper. The Savior at once put an end to the unfortunate dispute by recalling to the minds of the Twelve the ideal of true greatness, from which they were then so unseemly removed:

"The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and they that have power over them are called beneficient. But you not so. But he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is the leader, as he that serveth. For which is greater, he that sitteth at table, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? But I am in the midst of you as he that serveth."

[188] The two verbs used by St. Matthew and St. Luke plainly indicate this fact: *ἀνέκειτο, ἀνέπεσεν* (Vulg., *discumbebat, discubuit*).

[189] The incident is related only by St. Luke (22:24–30), and at a later point, following the denunciation of the traitor; but probably he has somewhat inverted the chronological order of the events at this point.

[190] Matt. 18:1–5 (Mark 9:32–36; Luke 9:46–48); Matt. 20:20–28 (Mark 10:35–45).

When, not long before, Christ rebuked the ambition of the sons of Zebedee, He drew this same contrast between the humility which should be practiced by those at the head of His Church and the pride of pagan kings, who exercised a haughty domination over their subjects and who nevertheless required those subjects to give them titles of praise, such as "Euergete," [191] "Father of the country," etc. The Christian Church too, was to have its aristocracy, its hierarchy; but it was to be an aristocracy of humble and generous service. Christ adds force to His admonition by citing a fact of experience directly suggested by the actual situation. Of two men, one comfortably reclining on a couch before a well-furnished table, the other standing up and waiting on the former, which is the superior? No one could fail to know the answer. Our Lord then summing up all the dealings He had had with His Apostles from the time when He first associated them with Himself, reminded them that He had ever been their servant. He thus gives them His own example to imitate.

But not wishing to leave them under the impression of a rebuke, He concludes His remarks with a word of tender praise: "You are they who have continued with Me in My temptations. And I [192] dispose to you as My Father hath disposed to Me, a kingdom; that you may eat and drink at My table, in My kingdom; and may sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

In spite of their faults, it was true that the Apostles had remained loyal to their Master. They had valiantly shared His "temptations," that is, His many trials, the persecutions and outrages inflicted on Him by His foes. They had not feared to expose themselves to the scorn and enmity of their

[191] Εὐεργέτης (Vulg., *benefici*). Cf. Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten*, 2d ed., pp. 184–186.

[192] The juxtaposition of the pronouns "you, I" makes the sentence very emphatic.

countrymen. To show His gratitude, Christ with delicate kindness promises them, as a sure inheritance, everlasting happiness and glory in His heavenly kingdom![193] And it is on the eve of His ignominious death that He makes these magnificent promises and bestows thrones and crowns!

We may suppose that the incident of the washing of the Apostles' feet came soon after. Jesus had just admonished them to practice humility. Among other things, He had said: "I am in the midst of you as he that serveth." He would now preach to them by example and would put His own advice into practice. This incident is one of the most charming and precious gems in the Fourth Gospel.[194] The Evangelist begins his account with a lengthy and solemn phrase, describing our Lord's outward circumstances and inner feelings at the time. It places in striking relief the Savior's supreme office and the extraordinary love He showed for His Apostles on this occasion.

"Jesus knowing that his hour was come, that He should pass out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end."

This majestic beginning encircles the Savior's brow with a heavenly halo. He knew He was going to die; this supernatural knowledge was a reason prompting Him to show more strongly and tenderly His love for the privileged ones of His heart. He had already given countless proofs of this love; but before leaving them, He wished to give them a remembrance of it of a wholly new sort. The words "unto the end" are a literal translation of the two Greek words used by the Evangelist.[195] But it is the view of the best Hellenists that the

[193] The joy of Heaven is often represented as a feast; see Ps. 35:9; Luke 14:15, etc.

[194] John 13:1–17.

[195] Εἰς τέλος (Vulg., *in finem*).

words may also mean "even to excess," to the highest degree. St. Cyril and St. John Chrysostom declare their preference for this second meaning, which corresponds so well to the reality. Recalling a detail previously mentioned by St. Luke,[196] St. John speaks of "the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot" to betray his Master. He also refers to the generosity of Christ, whose noble transport of soul was not halted by the traitor's ingratitude. St. John then continues:

"Knowing that the Father had given Him all things into His hands, and that He came from God and goeth to God, He riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments, and having taken a towel, girded Himself. After that, He putteth water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded."

How admirably the Evangelist introduces this remarkable act, and how well he indicates its cause, which was Christ's great love for His own. And he clearly emphasizes the value of the act by striking contrasts, which may be summed up in this phrase: the Son of God, fully aware of His divinity and stooping even to a service reserved for slaves.[197] From the literary point of view, what a difference between the imposing preamble and the brief and life-like account, with its short dramatic phrases, in which our Lord is shown to us preparing for the washing of the feet! And, as we may rightly suppose, what feelings of surprise and emotion among the Apostles, who wondered what the Master was about to do! They soon knew, for Jesus, passing behind the couches, stopped before Peter and made ready to wash his feet. It is probable that he is the one to whom our Lord came first; on this supposition we can better understand his protests and resistance, which would

[196] Luke 22:3.
[197] Cf. 1 Kings 25:41.

have been less reasonable if Jesus, before reaching him, had already washed the feet of several other Apostles.[198]

The brief dialogue which ensues between Simon Peter and the Master manifests the lively faith, the humility, and the ardent soul of the chief of Apostles. With his usual impulsiveness Peter says: "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?" These words of amazement are equivalent to a refusal. Jesus calms him, saying: "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." This amounted to saying: Be not uneasy about it; allow Me to proceed; you will soon understand the import of My act, after the explanation I will give of it to all. With obstinate resistance, Peter replied, in even stronger language: "Thou shalt never wash my feet." [199] Now Jesus says in a stern and threatening tone: "If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with Me." This signifies: Thou wilt be excluded from My communion, from My friendship. What relations of intimacy could there be between a master and a disciple who would refuse to obey his orders? Christ would be separated from Peter not only because the latter did not consent to let his feet be washed, but, according to the authentic interpretation that follows, because the Savior's symbolic act was a figure of the spirit of humility and charity that should exist between all Christians and because the Apostle could not oppose this principle without openly breaking with Jesus.

Not for anything in the world would Peter have consented to such a rupture. Therefore, he promptly changed his mind and, passing from one extreme to the other, he said: "Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head." As though an additional degree of union with his beloved Master would result from each part of his body which he would allow to be

[198] The commentators are not agreed on this point.

[199] There is a wealth of negatives in the Greek text: *οὐ μὴ νίψῃς . . . εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.*

washed! But the Savior replied: "He that is washed, needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly." In the Orient, on account of the heat, bathing is frequent; moreover, sandals are a poor protection for the feet against the dust and mud, and therefore our Lord washed only the feet of His Apostles. This is consequently an object lesson in the form of an expressive figure, the more strongly to indicate the holiness which Jesus required from His followers, especially in view of the Holy Eucharist which He was going to give them presently. Thus He added: "And you are clean," that is, you need not reproach yourselves with any serious fault, and it is enough that you cleanse yourselves of your slight faults. But, thinking of Judas, He adds a sad restriction: "You are clean, but not all." The idea of so odious a betrayal filled His soul; and He would soon return to this thought at greater length. Furthermore, by speaking thus, He was indirectly appealing to the traitor, who was there, his soul horribly stained. What feelings he must have experienced, when the good Master deigned to wash his feet! But he was thenceforth hardened in evil, and remained deaf to the warning of Jesus.

When Christ had performed this extraordinary act of humility and goodness for each of the Twelve, He removed the linen cloth with which He was girded, and again put on His cloak, that He had taken off so as not to be hindered in His movements. Then, resuming His place on the couch, He gave the Apostles the explanation which He had promised to Peter:

"Know you what I have done to you? You call me Master, and Lord; and you say well, for so I am. If then I being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also. Amen, amen, I say to you: The servant is not greater than his lord; neither is the apostle greater than he that

sent him. If you know these things, you shall be blessed if you do them."

"Master, lord"—*"Mar, Rabbi,"* in the language spoken by Christ—were the titles which disciples generally gave to the learned men by whom they were taught. The Apostles used these terms in their relations with Christ. Deducing a practical conclusion from these facts, the Savior urged His Apostles to imitate the example He had just given them. Of course He did not intend to make of the washing of the feet a permanent institution or an obligatory ceremony.[200] His act was chiefly a figure of fraternal charity, which Christians are obliged to practice toward one another. This is the third time we have heard the motto, "The servant is not greater than his lord." And Christ repeats it again a little later.[201] Each time He adapts it to new conclusions. Absorbed by the remembrance of the traitor, our Lord added:

"I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen. But that the Scripture may be fulfilled: He that eateth bread with Me, shall lift up his heel against Me. At present I tell you, before it come to pass, that when it shall come to pass, you may believe that I am He. Amen, amen I say to you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me."

This last expression also appears earlier in the Synoptic Gospels.[202] In this passage it contains a great consolation for the Apostles who remained faithful. The crime of one of their number will not deprive the others of any of their

[200] The literal interpretation of the Savior's words has not been neglected by the Church (cf. 1 Tim. 5:10; St. Ambrose, *De Mysteriis,* VI; Kraus, *Real-Encyklopädie der christl. Alterthümer,* I, 546–548). But in Christ's own mind, it was above all a symbolic act.

[201] Cf. Matt. 10:24; Luke 6:40; John 15:20.

[202] Matt. 10:40; Luke 9:48.

privileges. As for Judas, the Savior was neither surprised nor deceived by the events.[203] His choosing of Judas had been with full knowledge, for He was aware of his treason beforehand. Further, that choice took place in conformity with the divine plan, referred to long before in the Scriptures, particularly in the fortieth Psalm, [204] from which Jesus quotes a striking passage. David, the author of that poem, is describing his cruel and dastardly abandonment by his close friend Achitophel, when Absalom's revolt broke out; [205] he depicts its blackness by contrasting his own loving and generous conduct with the conduct of the ingrate who, after receiving all sorts of favors from him, "hath lifted up his heel" against him. This figure of brutal hate is taken from the kicks of a vicious horse. Although foretold by the ancient prophecies, Judas' treason was his free act, done with full knowledge, and especially that evening he was not without warnings. Jesus added that, in making so sad a declaration, He was thinking not only of the traitor, but also of the other Apostles. A few hours later, when His words will be literally fulfilled, even to an ignominious sameness in the manner of death for Judas and Achitophel (both hanged themselves), the disciples will not lose confidence in their Master, despite the events; but they will understand that neither had He vainly foretold His rising from the dead in the near future.

Along with many interpreters of the Gospels we have supposed that the washing of the feet was a sort of preamble to the legal supper. Other commentators prefer to assign it a somewhat later place, just before the institution of the Holy Eucharist.[206] These differences of opinion are inevitable, in-

[203] See Volume II, page 632. This fact reminds us of St. Mark's words (3:13) with regard to the calling of the Apostles: Jesus "called unto Him whom He would."

[204] Ps. 40:10 (Hebrew text, 41:10).

[205] See 2 Kings 15:31–17:23.

[206] Commentators are divided on the question of the Greek text of John 13:2.

asmuch as there is question of combining the four Gospel accounts into one harmonious whole. So great is our desire to picture Christ's last hours with the utmost exactness, that we regret any doubts even about such small chronological details. But they nowise impugn the historicity of the facts.

According to the order of events we have adopted, we now come to the Paschal meal itself. So solemn a rite had, of course, its special ceremonies, settled by ancient tradition, and we can be sure that our Lord conformed to them. The Evangelists do not describe them in detail. St. Matthew knew that his Judeo-Christian readers were acquainted with them; St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John deemed them profitless for the Romans, Greeks, and Asiatics for whom they were writing primarily. The Synoptics proceed directly to the event which was the chief one for Christians, namely, the Eucharistic supper. Thanks to ancient Jewish documents, we are familiar with those ceremonies; but they were developed after the time of Christ, and it would be difficult to point out which ones were strictly obligatory. Those which we are about to mention seem to have been considered essential.[207]

The number of those at table must not be less than ten, nor greater than twenty. They began by washing their hands. When they had all taken their places, the father of the family, or whoever represented him, took in his hands a goblet filled with wine (usually red wine), slightly diluted with water,

Some favor the reading γινομένου (present participle), which would refer to the beginning of the meal; others accept the variant γενομένου (past tense; Vulg., *coenâ factâ*), which would indicate the end of the legal meal.

[207] See the Talmudic tractate *Pesashim;* Bartolocci, *Bibliotheca Magna Rabbinica,* 1617, II, 736–740; Lund, *Die alten jüdischen Heiligthümer,* 1704, p. 931; Buxtorf, *Synagoga Iudaica,* xviii; Haneberg, *Die religiösen Alterthümer der Bibel,* 2d ed., pp. 630–635; Edersheim, *The Temple and its Services,* pp. 196–214; Friedlieb, *Archäologie der Leidensgeschichte,* pp. 43–47; Langen, *Die letzten Lebenstage Jesu,* pp. 148–155. On the customs which the Jews of to-day practice at the Paschal supper, see Coypel, *Le Judaïsme, Esquisse de Mœurs Juives,* pp. 240 ff.; Créhange, *La Haggadah ou Cérémonies Religieuses des Israëlites pendant les deux Premières Soirées de Pâque,* 3d ed., 1873.

and having blessed it, recited a prayer that began with the words: "Be Thou blessed, O Lord our God, who hast created the fruit of the vine." He took a sip of the wine and passed the goblet to the others present, each of them drinking a mouthful. The table was then brought into the midst of the couches. After pronouncing a special blessing over the bitter herbs, he who was presiding at the meal took a few leaves of the herbs, dipped them into the sauce called *haroset,* and ate them. The others at table then did in like manner. Only then was the Paschal lamb placed upon the table.

Next, as had been commanded at the time of the flight from Egypt,[208] the father of the family explained to those present the meaning of the festival and its special ceremonies. Following this explanation, there was recited the prayer called Hallel, which is made up of Psalms 112 and 113 (113 and 114, according to the Hebrew Psalter). A second goblet was then filled and passed around. This second phase of the meal closed with the prayer: "Be Thou blessed, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast delivered us, and who didst deliver our fathers from Egypt."

The third part began with another washing of the hands. The one presiding at table took a cake of unleavened bread, broke it into several pieces, and ate his own piece after adding bitter herbs and dipping all in the *haroset;* then he passed the rest to the others. The next ceremony was the blessing of the Paschal lamb, which was delicately cut up and divided among those present. With it other food was served; the ritual left a certain freedom for this part of the meal. But it was a rule that the symbolic lamb must be eaten last and that nothing should be eaten after it. At the close of the meal, a third goblet, known as "the chalice of benediction" because it was blessed with a special formula, was emptied, as had been the two preceding ones; then was sung the second part of the

[208] Ex. 12:26.

Hallel prayer (Psalms 114–117; 115–118 in the Hebrew Bible). A fourth goblet of wine usually terminated the feast. But if anyone so wished, a fifth might be added, on the explicit condition of reciting the "great Hallel" (Psalms 119–136; 120–137 in the Hebrew) as a general conclusion to the meal. All these ceremonies considerably prolonged the affair; but it was urged that all should withdraw before midnight.

Such were the principal ceremonies of the Paschal feast. The four cups, from which no one could be dispensed, divided it into parts of unequal length and, with the Paschal lamb, the unleavened bread, and the *haroset,* formed one of its chief elements. At this point a question arises: Did our Lord first celebrate the legal repast in its entirety, as we have just described it, and then pass to the Eucharistic supper? Or did He combine the two in a holy and harmonious manner, taking some ceremonies and formulas from the ancient Pasch? The commentators fail to agree on this point, as they do on the date of the Last Supper; some favor the first of these hypotheses, and some the second. The name "chalice of benediction," given to the third cup, has inclined many to favor the second opinion. As St. Paul [209] designates the Eucharistic chalice by this same appellation, some have regarded the coincidence as a proof that our Lord consecrated the third cup and converted the wine it contained into His own blood. But the coincidence seems to be merely fortuitous. What appears to us more striking is the importance attached to the regular order of the traditional ceremonies.

Certainly Christ had the right to change them, since He was actually performing an act that was to abrogate them in the near future. But from the rare allusions in the Gospels and from the respect which He showed for the sacred ceremonies in general, when Pharisaism had not disfigured their spirit, it seems to us we may conclude that, until the fourth

[209] See 1 Cor. 10:16.

cup inclusive, consequently until the end of the legal meal, everything took place in conformity with the customary rites. St. Luke, for example, says that the Eucharistic cup was consecrated by Christ "after He had supped." [210] On the other hand, it is true that St. Matthew and St. Mark, before relating the consecration of the bread, say that it took place "whilst they were eating," [211] that is, during the meal. But this latter detail proves little, because what we, for the sake of distinguishing them better, call the legal supper and the Eucharistic supper, formed only one and the same meal. Moreover, there is no doubt but that Jesus, in instituting the Eucharist, made use of formulas and of food taken from the Jewish Pasch.

Let us now return to the Gospel accounts. According to our view, it was after the washing of the feet, which event followed the legal repast, that the Savior, giving free rein to a feeling of sadness that more and more filled His soul, clearly foretold His horrible betrayal. Twice before He had alluded to it, but in veiled words, during the short discourse after the washing of the feet.[212] He returned to the subject, urged by the anguish and bitterness that filled His heart. The four Evangelists unite in describing this sorrowful scene, upon which they (especially St. John) supply truly dramatic details.[213] As at the tomb of His friend Lazarus,[214] Jesus "was troubled in spirit" [215] in the presence of this infamous ingratitude and, St. John says, "He testified and said: Amen, amen I say to you, one of you shall betray Me." It is for the purpose of testifying more forcibly to the certainty of

[210] Luke 22:20.
[211] Matt. 26:21; Mark 14:18.
[212] John 13:10 f., 18.
[213] Matt. 26:21–25; Mark 14:18–21; Luke 17:21–23; John 13:18–30.
[214] John 11:33.
[215] John 13:21: τῷ πνεύματι (Vulg., *spiritu*), in the higher sphere of His soul, as opposed to purely natural feeling.

this prediction, that our Lord introduces it by His usual form of oath.

The Apostles had not protested upon hearing the two earlier allusions, which they probably did not fully comprehend, as the terms used by the Savior were vaguer and more indirect. But this time misunderstanding is impossible. It is through one of the Twelve that the Master will be betrayed. Such a declaration stuns them. They are troubled and look at one another in consternation, as if seeking to ascertain which of them Christ has in mind. In speechless amazement, they can at first find no words to express their feelings. Then, taking courage, they all together ask their Master: "Is it I, Lord?" [216] Each of them had quickly examined his own conscience, and no one, except Judas, had found anything to make him fear that he was capable of committing such a crime. But from experience they knew that the Savior's word was infallible and, despite their resolve to remain faithful to Him, they mistrusted their own weakness.

Our Lord's reply was a simple confirmation of the terrible prophecy: "He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, he shall betray Me." He was referring to the Eastern custom of each one at table reaching his hand directly into the common platter and, with the help of a piece of bread, taking from it a little meat or vegetable or sauce.[217] Not yet did He ostensibly designate Judas. Only by taking these words literally have some been able to suppose that the traitor then reached out his hand to the platter at the same time as his Master. If he had done so, all the Apostles would have understood who was meant; whereas, as the rest of the account shows beyond doubt, it was not until somewhat later that the Savior revealed His secret to the beloved disciple. The expression

[216] The μήτι ἐγὼ εἰμι of the Greek expects a negative answer. Literally: "It is not I, is it?"

[217] Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 23, figs. 1 and 2.

still remained general, scarcely differing from the prophecy cited by our Lord at the close of His previous instruction.[218] But it emphasized the monstrous character of the betrayal, the author of which would be a friend, a privileged disciple, one of the Twelve.[219]

To stress the traitor's crime still further, Jesus made this majestic and threatening declaration: "The Son of Man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed. It were better for him, if that man had not been born." The antithesis between the criminal Apostle and the Son of Man is eloquent to the highest degree. Christ "goeth," that is, following the usual meaning of this verb in Gospel literature,[220] He goes, with complete free will, on the path that leads to death. For Him it was also the path of obedience, since it had been marked out beforehand by the ancient prophecies, which He wished to fulfil to the last word.[221] What a different end was in reserve for the traitor, should he not profit by these final warnings given him by the Savior! Although Christ's words may be regarded as a sigh of pity rather than as a real curse,[222] yet the *"Vae homini illi . . ."* is nevertheless a terrible utterance. "It were better for that man that he had not been born, since he was born for his punishment, and since his existence will serve only to make his misery everlasting." [223] Judas, moved

[218] John 13:18.

[219] We have already remarked that, according to the ideas current in the East, to take a meal with anyone establishes close bonds with him, and is equivalent to a sort of alliance.

[220] Especially in the Fourth Gospel (John 7:30; 8:14, 21; 13:3, 33; 14:4). In the Greek ὑπάγει (St. Luke: πορεύεται).

[221] Instead of "as it is written of Him" (St. Matthew and St. Mark), St. Luke has the expressive variant κατὰ τὸ ὡρισμένον (Vulg., *secundum quod definitum est*), "according to that which has been determined" by God.

[222] *"Quibus verbis iniquum hunc proditorem in caritate deplorabat"* (St. Ephrem, quoted by Swete, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, p. 314).

[223] Bossuet, *Méditations sur l'Évangile*, last week, 20th day. A Protestant theologian, R. Stier, says: "These words, taken literally and in all their rigor, for-

perhaps upon hearing these words with their sentence of damnation or, as is more likely, fearing to be betrayed by his very silence, asked with cold effrontery: "Is it I, Lord?" "Thou hast said it," Jesus answered in a low voice, so as to be heard only by him—which has led to the supposition that they were seated near each other.

Then occurred a little incident which the author of the Fourth Gospel has preserved in all its freshness.[224] To grasp this intimate scene, which was very brief, we should recall that each of the dinner couches ordinarily held three persons, the most honored person being in the middle, the two others reclining, one in front of him and the other behind him.[225] The context gives us reason to suppose that Jesus, Peter, and John shared the same couch. Our Lord occupied the place of honor; in front of Him was the beloved disciple, while Peter was behind Him, on the other side of the couch.[226]

Peter, wishing to know the traitor's name at once, rose to a half-sitting posture and made a sign to draw John's attention; when the latter turned toward him, Peter spoke a brief word to him. At all events, the narrative shows that the two disciples were not far from each other. It is indeed Simon Peter, such as we already know him from the previous pages of the Gospel history. Ardent, restless, passionately loving his Master, he could no longer bear the cruel uncertainty stirred in him by the announcement that the Savior would be

ever close the door of hope. They exclude any thought of ulterior and final salvation, because, if there could have been a redemption for Judas' soul in the future course of ages, it would be better for him to have been born." (*Reden Jesu, in h. l.*)

[224] John 13:23–30.

[225] Cf. Lightfoot, *Horae Hebr. et Talmud. in Evangel., h. l.;* Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean,* p. 270.

[226] The following lines of Pliny the Younger (*Epist.,* IV, xxii, 4) describe a similar situation: *"Coenabat Nerva cum paucis; Veiento proximus, atque etiam in sinu recumbebat."* Nerva thus occupied the place of honor, as Jesus did, Veiento that of St. John. Cf. Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* pl. 23, figs. 1, 4, 7.

betrayed by one of the Twelve. Perhaps he hoped to save Jesus, and he would more easily succeed in doing so if he knew who was the faithless Apostle.[227] He asked the beloved disciple: "Who is it of whom He speaketh?" John, turning around and leaning on the Savior's breast,[228] said to Him: "Lord, who is it?" Jesus, who had no secrets from His favorite Apostle, replied in a low voice: "He it is to whom I shall reach a piece dipped." What was this piece? The meaning of the Greek word used by the Evangelist [229] is not quite certain; probably it means bread, as the Vulgate translates it. Such is also the general view of interpreters. Jesus, then, broke a piece of unleavened bread and dipped it into the *haroset* (that mixed sauce which we have described), and gave it to Judas. This act was in itself a mark of honor and friendship. Even to-day in the Biblical East, when a host wishes to show special respect or affection for one of his guests, he gathers some bits of food on a little piece of bread and hands it to him directly. The Talmud says that, towards the end of the Paschal feast, the father of the family acted in this way.[230]

When Judas had eaten this morsel, says the Evangelist, "Satan entered into him," thus taking complete possession of his soul. St. Luke [231] pointed out a first phase, a first degree of this possession, when he spoke of the traitor going to the chief priests with his infamous proposal; St. John here describes its last phase, which was definitive. Judas, though

[227] Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean*, p. 271.

[228] The phrase ἐπὶ τὸ στῆθος (Vulg., *supra pectus*) gave St. John, from very early times, the beautiful name of ἐπιστήθιος, "he who reclines upon the breast." (Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, V, viii, 24.) He was advanced in years when he wrote his Gospel; but the memory of that scene was so living in his heart and possessed such a charm for him, that he returns to it three times in the last chapters (19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20.)

[229] Ψωμίον.

[230] J. Belser, *Die Geschichte des Leidens und Sterbens des Herrn*, p. 181.

[231] Luke 22:3.

still preserving his complete free will, now more than ever acts as an instrument of Satan.

Christ then said to Judas: "That which thou dost, do quickly." By these words, which were spoken aloud, He showed him that He was aware of everything, thus offering him a final grace. At the same time He allowed him to leave that he might carry out his dastardly plan, if he had the sad courage to do so. None of the other Apostles understood why our Lord spoke thus to Judas, so well had the traitor succeeded in concealing his vices and his scheme. To the last moment they are in complete ignorance of his perfidious plot. Two suppositions, both far from the truth, came to the mind of some of the Apostles. As Judas was the treasurer of the little community, they thought the Master had directed him to buy what was needed for the next day's feast, or to give some alms to the poor, according to the custom of the Jews at the time of the great religious festivals.[232] Moreover, very evidently none of the faithful disciples expected Christ's prophecy about a treason emanating from their own circle to be carried out so quickly.

Judas departed immediately. At the remembrance of the crime which the traitor was preparing to commit, the Evangelist closes his account with this simple remark, which is tragic in its brevity, and produces a striking and lugubrious effect: "And it was night." Darkness befitted the sinister, revolting work that Judas was about to perform. Especially in his soul it was night. We do not have to search long as to the place whither he directed his steps upon leaving the Cenacle. He quickly betook himself to the chief priests to tell them that the favorable opportunity, so eagerly awaited by them all, had been found, and that they simply had to make ready to proceed to His arrest. Judas undertook to deliver Him "without a tumult," as had been agreed upon.

[232] Neh. 8: 10, 12.

At this point, many readers will ask whether the traitor was present at the institution of the Holy Eucharist. That he was, is the view of a large number of modern commentators, and we can say that it is very probable, although not certain. This opinion is far from being a recent one. Although, until modern times, the contrary view was more generally held, yet the thesis excluding Judas from the Eucharistic table goes back to early times. Tatian in the second century, Ammonius in the third, St. James of Nizibe, St. Hilary, and St. Ephrem in the fourth, favored it. Later it was maintained by Rupert of Deutz, Peter Comestor, Pope Innocent III, and other weighty exegetes and theologians. For such a difference of opinion to exist on this point (which, however, is of quite secondary importance), it must be that the Gospel text presents some difficulty.

The problem is briefly as follows.[233] According to St. Matthew and St. Mark, when evening was come, Jesus sat at table with the Twelve and, toward the end of the legal meal which preceded the Eucharistic supper, He foretold to His disciples that one of them would betray Him. The Divine Master then consecrated the bread and wine, which He distributed to those present and, after giving thanks, He set out with them to Gethsemani. St. Luke coordinates the events differently. Christ instituted the Eucharist and divided it among those at table; only after that did He speak of the traitor who would deliver Him to His enemies. The Evangelist next reports the discussion that arose among the Apostles, as to which of them was the greatest, and the Savior's words on that occasion.[234] Thus, according to the two first Synoptics, the denunciation of the traitor preceded the institution of the Eucharist. In St. Luke's narrative we have the contrary order

[233] For more extended treatment of this point, see Fillion, *Essais d'Exégèse*, pp. 311–326; Langen, *Die letzten Lebenstage Jesu*. pp. 165–170.

[234] Matt. 26: 21–29; Mark 14: 18–25; Luke 22: 15–30.

of events. If the events really occurred in the order indicated in the Third Gospel, It would be necessary to admit that the traitor received communion along with the other Apostles. But it is generally acknowledged that in this passage Luke groups the events according to a logical and subjective rather than the real order, that he proceeds "piecemeal" and in a disconnected manner, that the scenes he relates are placed one after the other, almost without transition, in an altogether independent manner. Thus he delays until after the legal repast, even until after the Eucharistic supper, the discussion between the Apostles about their relative greatness, although it must have broken out much earlier. Twice in succession he mentions the consecrated chalice—which is a still graver matter.

We are, therefore, justified in preferring the sequence of events as given by Matthew and Mark; in that case Judas did not necessarily participate in the Eucharist. St. John enables us to solve the question in a more positive way. While he does not describe the institution of the Sacrament of the altar, the prediction about the betrayal by one of the Twelve in his account is connected immediately with the washing of the feet. Since it was following this prophecy that Judas was sent out, it becomes very probable, by combining the narratives of Matthew, Mark, and John, that he had already left the Cenacle when our Lord changed the bread and wine into His body and blood. If we are right in holding this view, we should be happy to think that the traitor did not sadden the inauguration of the Eucharistic banquet by his odious presence, and that he did not profane the most august of the Sacraments by a horrible sacrilege at the very moment it was instituted.

The traitor's departure was a solace for the Savior's soul. Having entirely recovered His calm, and feeling Himself encompassed only by faithful friends, He said: "With desire

I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer." [235] Through these loving words we feel a mixture of joy and sadness: of joy, because the Savior longed to become "the Lamb immolated for us, the Victim of our deliverance" (Bossuet), and to give Himself to us in the form of the Eucharist; of sadness, too, because He would be separated, at least outwardly and visibly, from His Apostles, whom He loved so dearly. Partly explaining His thought, He added: "For I say to you, that from this time I will not eat it till it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God." The Paschal lamb, which He had just eaten for the last time, was a symbol; in the Kingdom of God in its consummation, that is, in heaven, this symbol will be completely fulfilled. These words, therefore, refer to the eternal Pasch of Heaven, where no longer will there be imperfect shadows, but a glorious reality.

The Synoptics, who pass over the legal meal quickly, treat the Eucharistic supper at greater length. Their accounts, though perfectly clear, are rather brief. Disregarding, as is their practice, all secondary details, they go directly to the events, which they describe, while conserving the character of simplicity and greatness that our Lord gave them. Let us also note a very happy and providential circumstance, the significance of which we shall better understand in a moment. St. John, who devotes several pages of his Gospel to the promise of the Eucharist [236] (which promise the other Evangelists do not mention), considered that he might properly omit any account of the fulfilment of that promise. But St. Paul replaces him in this, and adds his account of the institution to the narratives of the first three Evangelists. In the First Epistle to the Corinthians,[237] after saying that the Savior

[235] Luke 22:15. In the thoroughly Hebraic expression ἐπεθυμήσα (Vulg., *desiderio desideravi*) the idea is made very emphatic.

[236] John 6:22–72.

[237] See 1 Cor. 11:23–25. This Epistle was written about the year 52.

personally revealed to him the mystery of the Cenacle, he gives a description of it which closely resembles that of his disciple, St. Luke, the latter naturally having used the narrative of his venerated master. For the institution of the Eucharist we thus have two groups of accounts. St. Matthew and St. Mark, closely resembling each other, form the first group; St. Paul and St. Luke, the second.[238] Let us also remark that Christ began His public life by receiving John the Baptist's baptism, a prelude of Christian baptism, and that just at the close of that public life He gives us the Eucharist: this is a happy association of two of the richest and most beneficent sacraments.

The words "Whilst they were eating," in the first two Gospels, introduce another phase of the Last Supper. At this point, says St. Jerome, "we pass to the true sacrament of the Pasch." Taking from the table one of the unleavened loaves of bread which had been placed before Him, Jesus blessed it, pronouncing the usual prayer,[239] and then broke it, so that each of the Twelve might have his part. It was this ceremony, copied by the Apostles and their successors, which in the early Church gave to the Eucharistic mysteries the name of "breaking of bread." [240] At the time of the two miraculous multiplications of loaves, the Savior had acted in the same way,[241] first raising His eyes to heaven, as He must also have done in the Cenacle. Before distributing the bread to His disciples, He said to them: "Take ye, and eat." He then pro-

[238] Matt. 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:19 f.; 1 Cor. 11:23–25.

[239] See Volume II, page 478.

[240] Acts 2:46; 20:7, 11; 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:24; St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Epist. ad Eph.*, 20. The word "Eucharist" comes from εὐχαριστήσας, by which St. Luke designates the blessing either of the bread or of the wine; St. Paul uses it for the blessing of the bread; St. Matthew and St. Mark for the blessing of the wine. Literally it means: "having rendered thanks (to God)."

[241] Matt. 14:19; Mark 6:41; Luke 9:16; John 6:11.

nounced these sacramental words: "This is My body which is given for you." [242]

That the banquet of divine love might be complete, a drink of the same nature was needed. The chalice, which had already been passed around several times during the legal feast, now brings to the Apostles a divine drink. The shape of the chalice used by our Lord was not that with which we are familiar. According to archaeological data, it was a shallow, broad goblet, with a very low base and two small handles, copied from Greek and Roman models, according to the Jewish custom of the time.[243] Into this chalice Christ poured some red wine, which has always been the most common in Palestine, and also a little water, as tradition generally affirms. Moreover, the Jewish ceremonial explicitly prescribed this mingling of water and wine in the cup at the legal feast.[244] After these brief preparations, the Savior pronounced over the cup, as He had over the bread, the usual form of blessing. He then slightly raised it and consecrated it, saying: "Drink ye all of this. For this is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins." [245] The chalice was then passed from one to another of the Eleven; "and they all drank of it," says St. Mark.

Thus, in the simplest and yet loftiest manner, Christ, fulfilling the promise to give His flesh as food and His blood as drink, instituted the Sacrament of the Altar. In the presence

[242] St. Matthew and St. Mark cite only the first four words, to which St. Luke adds: *τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον* (Vulg., *quod pro vobis datur*), "which is given for you." St. Paul says *τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν*, "which for you."

[243] Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I, art. "Cup."

[244] Lightfoot, *De Minister. Templi*, XIII, 3.

[245] We quote the text from St. Matthew's account. The words "unto remission of sins" are not found in St. Mark's Gospel. According to St. Paul, our Lord said: "This chalice is the new testament in My blood." St. Luke is even more complete: "This chalice [is] the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you."

of so noble and generous a gift, it would be best, perhaps, for us to adore and be silent. But we can hardly pass over the words which Jesus used in consecrating the bread and wine, without speaking of their exact meaning and import. We have noted the shades of difference in the four authentic versions, and the reader himself has been able to perceive that these variations are slight and do not change the sense in the least. Some of the formulas are shorter, others more complete; there is scarcely any other difference between them. We should bear in mind that our Lord spoke in Aramaic and that the Eucharistic formulas, as in general all His sayings, have been recorded only in a Greek translation. This fact explains the slight variants mentioned. But we cannot be sure which of the eight formulas offers the best guaranty of authenticity. Substantially, no doubt, they are all exact and give us Christ's real thought. When we examine them in the ancient liturgies, we find that they offer similar differences.[246] Instead of adopting some one or other of the Biblical formulas, whether for the consecration of the bread or for that of the wine, the liturgies combine them in various ways, without condensing them, but slightly lengthening them.

Let us briefly review them, so as to note their meaning.[247] The lips of the God-Man had rarely uttered words more important than these, which instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the sacrifice of the New Covenant, and the Christian priesthood. The words by which He consecrated the bread

[246] Several of them will be found in Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Luc*, p. 364.

[247] It is not our purpose to study these formulas from the dogmatic standpoint. The reader is referred to the principal theologians for that aspect of the question. See also the following special works: Cardinal Wiseman, *The Real Presence of the Body and the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ;* Franzelin, *Tractatus de SS. Eucharistiae Sacramento et Sacrificio;* W. Koch, *Das Abendmahl im Neuen Testament;* Battifol, *L'Eucharistie, la Présence Réelle et la Transsubstantiation;* Dictionaries of the Bible and Dictionaries of Theology, under the word "Eucharist"; especially Lebreton's article in the *Dictionnaire Apologétique de la Foi Catholique,* Vol. I. See also Appendix IX, *infra.*

have been handed down identically by our four documents in their essential part: "This is My body." This language is perfectly clear. The demonstrative pronoun "this," which is neuter in the Greek text and in our Latin version, represents in a general way what our Lord was then holding in His hands and was about to distribute to the Apostles. In phrases of this sort, the Aramaic idiom uses no verb. It says simply, "This, My body," or more forcibly, by the insertion of a second pronoun, "This, it, My body." The verb was required by the genius of Indo-Germanic languages and was inserted without changing the meaning of Christ's words. But it thereby becomes more and more evident that the sentence "This is My body," as also "This is My blood," could not mean: "This is a figure of My body, a symbol of My blood," as some, following Zwingli, have claimed. Only one interpretation is grammatically and logically possible: What you behold, what I am going to give you to eat, is really My body, in spite of appearances. Is it not His own flesh, hidden indeed under the species of bread, which Jesus earlier promised His disciples, as a heavenly food far superior to manna?[248] And when several of His hearers were scandalized because they supposed He meant them to eat His cut-up and bleeding body, He did not retract His words, because those men, although grossly mistaken as to the manner of the proposed eating, had rightly interpreted the substance of the Savior's meaning. Thus, therefore, in the expressions "This is My body," "This is My blood," the subject and the predicate attribute are absolutely identical. While Christ pronounced these simple phrases, a change of substance was effected by virtue of His all-powerful will: the bread became His flesh, and the wine was changed into His blood.

This meaning does not permit of the least doubt. It is the meaning understood by the Apostles, the one which was spread

[248] John 6: 54–57.

in the early Church through them, the one which St. Paul defended, not only when he described "the Lord's Supper," that is, the institution of the Sacrament, but even more clearly when he added: "Whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord." [249] Such was also the interpretation of the Fathers of the second century, particularly the author of the Didache, St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Justin, St. Irenaeus, Tertullian, and their successors.[250]

We may, then, say with Bossuet: "What simplicity, . . . what clearness and force in these words! If Jesus meant to give a sign, a mere resemblance, He could have said so. . . . Whenever He set forth similitudes, He gave His language a turn so as to have this understood, so that no one was ever in doubt about it: I am the gate; I am the vine. . . . When He makes comparisons or similitudes, the Evangelists say: Jesus spoke this parable, He made this comparison. In the present case, without any preliminary remark, without qualification, without any explanation either before or after, the text tells us tersely: Jesus said: This is My body, This is My blood; My body which is given, My blood which shall be shed: this is what I give you. . . . What clearness, what precision, what force! But also what authority and power in these words! . . . This is My body; it is His body. This is My blood; it is His blood. Who can so speak, except Him who holds all in His hand? . . . Do thou, my soul, halt here, without further speech; but as simply and strongly as thy Savior has spoken, with as great submission as He showed authority and power. . . . I am silent, I believe, I adore." [251]

From the legal meal Christ took several ceremonies of the

[249] 1 Cor. 11:27.

[250] See various citations in Monsabré, *Explication du Dogme Catholique*, 5th ed., II, 42–49, and in works of theology.

[251] *Méditations sur l'Évangile*, last week, 22d day.

Eucharistic meal. Thus He blessed, broke, and distributed the unleavened bread. In cutting up the lamb, He said, in conformity with the ritual of the feast: "This is the body of the Paschal lamb." In like manner apropos of the consecrated cup. To a certain extent thus tracing the new supper upon the lines of the old, our Lord wished to show the relation existing between the figure and the reality. As the ancient formula which accompanied the distribution of the Paschal lamb to those at table, designated a real body of flesh and bones, so the new formula must designate a real body, the body of Christ, and not a mere symbol.

St. Luke and St. Paul add to the words "This is My body," the words, "which is given for you"; and St. Luke in a similar way supplements the other expression: My blood, "which shall be shed for you." These words are of great significance in this connection, for they show a special character which our Lord attributed to His act. He meant that it was a real sacrifice, a mystical immolation of His whole human being, preceding by a few hours His bloody immolation of the morrow. This sacrifice He offered to His Father "for many unto remission of sins," because that was the chief purpose of His Passion and death.

His divine blood, shed for us to the last drop, produces another precious result. This He Himself indicates when He calls it "My blood of the New Testament." The covenant of Sinai, entered into between Jehovah and the Hebrews, had been inaugurated and sealed by the blood of many victims.[252] Moses, sprinkling a few drops of this blood upon the people, had said: "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you." Jesus wishes to inaugurate and seal by blood, His own blood, the new Covenant, foretold by Jeremias,[253] a covenant with the Messias as the glorious Mediator.

We have not enumerated all the riches that Christ be-

[252] Ex. 24: 5–8; Heb. 9: 18–26.
[253] Jer. 31: 31–37.

queathed to us in the Last Supper. According to St. Paul's account,[254] Jesus twice—immediately after the consecration of the bread and after that of the wine—pronounced these other words, "Do this for the commemoration of Me," which made the Eucharist a permanent institution. The Pasch, which was repeated yearly, constantly reminded the Jewish people of the covenant of Sinai. The Savior did not wish the Christian Pasch to be merely a transient episode: therefore He established the Sacrament of Holy Orders at the same time as that of the Eucharist, giving to His Apostles, and through them to all their successors in the hierarchy, the power to consecrate the bread and wine into His body and blood, as He Himself had done. His Church would thus forever have a precious and living memorial of His Passion, of His death, and of His love. The Eucharist, daily reproduced on the Christian altars of the whole world, commemorates a deliverance, after the manner of the Paschal lamb; but a loftier, universal deliverance, effected upon the cross by our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no true religion without sacrifices and therefore without a priesthood. In Christ's immolation on the following day, He was going to become our bleeding Victim; and this Victim of infinite price would be immolated by Himself as sovereign Priest of the New Testament. But that was not enough for His generous goodness. It pleased Him to remain outwardly and corporeally in our midst, although under lowly appearances, and to sacrifice Himself ceaselessly for us to His heavenly Father as an unbloody Victim. Therefore did He create priests, whose loftiest duty consists in reproducing the sacrifice of Calvary under the form it first received in the Cenacle, *i. e.*, under the species of bread and wine.

The Apostles understood that such was the meaning of the

[254] See 1 Cor. 11:24 and 25. In Luke 22:19, this command is mentioned only once, following the consecration of the bread. St. Matthew and St. Mark make no mention of it.

words, "Do this for a commemoration of Me." It is also very likely that they received more complete instructions on this matter from the risen Savior. And so we see them, immediately after Pentecost,[255] celebrating in the meetings of the faithful the Eucharistic rite, which was given the significant name of "breaking of bread," because, before consecrating the bread, they broke it into pieces, as Christ had done. St. Paul is a very reliable witness as to this practice, which is mentioned here and there in his life and epistles.[256] We have already seen that his testimony is confirmed by the earliest ecclesiastical writers. The Christian monuments of the first centuries are also instructive on this subject.[257] A veritable command is contained in the words, "Do this for a commemoration of Me." These words are capable of only one interpretation, namely: In your turn, do you also take bread and wine, consecrate them by using the formulas you have just heard; in your hands, as just now in Mine, these substances will be changed into My flesh and blood, with which you will nourish yourselves, so as to live by My own life. And this power was not limited: "Do this"—to-morrow, always, in all places, and I will obey your all-powerful voice.

We have yet to explain two other expressions which our Lord used in connection with the institution of the Eucharist. When passing the chalice and its sacred contents, He said to the Eleven: "Drink ye all of this," and St. Mark adds that, in conformity with this command, "they all drank of it." We have not accepted the opinion that the Eucharistic chalice was identical with the third cup of the legal feast, the cup called the "chalice of benediction." [258] Along with many other commentators, we think that the words "Drink ye all of this" lead

[255] Acts 2:42.
[256] Acts 20:7, 11; 1 Cor. 10:16.
[257] Cf. Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie*, Vol. II, part 2, cols. 3045–3048.
[258] See *supra*, p. 386.

us to a more solid interpretation. The Paschal ritual of the Jews informs us that, at the close of the feast, at the request of some at table, it was allowable to serve a fifth cup of wine, which had not, like the four preceding cups, an obligatory character for all. If this cup were the one consecrated by Christ, we can better understand His insistence when He said to the Apostles: "Drink ye all of this," for He wished that none of them should dispense himself from drinking of this chalice filled with His blood. Such, therefore, it seems to us, was the real Eucharistic chalice.

We naturally long to know every detail of that last evening of the Savior's life. Therefore it is sometimes asked whether He Himself partook of the consecrated bread and wine. As in the case of all questions of this sort, where our judgment has almost nothing to guide it except reasons of fitness, theologians have taken opposite views. While St. John Chrysostom,[259] St. Jerome,[260] St. Augustine, [261] St. Thomas Aquinas,[262] and others answer this question affirmatively, large numbers of others reply in the negative, because they think that the act thus attributed to our Lord is repugnant to the idea of communion, which presupposes at least two distinct beings. Moreover, when passing the consecrated chalice, Christ pronounced these words, quoted by the three Synoptics: "And I say to you, I will not drink from henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the kingdom of My Father." [263] By using these words, partly modeled on the Jewish formula which served for the blessing of the Paschal cups, did not the Divine Mas-

[259] *Homil. in Matth.*, 82, *h. l.*

[260] *Epist. ad Hedib.*, quest. 2: *"Ipse conviva et convivium; ipse comedens et qui comeditur."*

[261] *De Doctr. Christ.*, II, 3.

[262] *Summa Theolog.*, p. III, qu. 81, a. 1.

[263] Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18. The Savior had already expressed a similar thought, in connection with eating the pasch. (Cf. Luke 22:15 f.)

ter, in a way, excuse Himself for not partaking of the Eucharistic chalice, because from that moment He would not taste any earthly wine? However this may be, the words have an imprint of solemn grandeur. Our Lord therein again declares that His death is near at hand, since the words amount to saying that this meal will be His last on earth. And He foretells His glorious triumph, when He thus transports His Apostles to a time, still far off indeed, when they would rejoin Him in the other life; and when all together they would share in the delights of Heaven, once more compared to a joyous feast. Jesus thus connects His farewell with an *au revoir* full of the sweetest hopes.[264]

If, in the institution of the Eucharist, the events took place in the order we have indicated, the thanksgiving hymn mentioned by St. Matthew and St. Mark[265] was the great Hallel, conformable to the traditional regulations.[266] Then began an intimate conversation between the Master and the disciples. The four Evangelists, St. John especially, have recorded considerable fragments of it. St. Matthew and St. Mark, whose account is much abridged, seem to say that, immediately after the supper, Christ left the Cenacle and set out for Gethsemani; in that case the conversation would have begun on the way thither. But St. Luke and St. John tell us explicitly that the conversation lasted for some time in the Cenacle; the author of the Fourth Gospel even notes the moment of the departure very precisely.[267]

The Savior made three predictions, only the second of which

[264] Such was the purpose of the institution of the Paschal festival, Ex. 12:14; 13:9.

[265] Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26.

[266] See *supra*, page 385. It was not, as legend has it, a prayer improvised for the occasion. (Cf. *Acta Joannis*, 3d ed., II, 197.)

[267] Luke 22:31–39; John 13:36–14:31. For this whole episode, St. Matthew and St. Mark resemble each other very closely, while St. Luke and St. John follow an independent course.

was of a consoling character. He began by telling the eleven Apostles, thus far loyal, the deplorable attitude they would take towards Him by abandoning Him in their fright.[268] "All you," He said, "shall be scandalized in Me this night. For it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be dispersed." Several times before He had warned the Apostles against scandal, that is, against whatever might be an occasion of their fall;[269] never had the warning been directed to so grave a matter, never had it foretold so desolating a fall. And all would succumb: all without exception, even Peter, even James and John.[270] Yet it is a question only of momentary desertion, not of complete abandonment. The blow that was going to strike the Savior would be an occasion of fall for His disciples, as the prophet Zacharias[271] had foretold in figurative language, which Jesus quotes somewhat freely. In the Hebrew text, God is majestically addressing an exterminating sword, saying to it: "Arise, O sword, against My shepherd . . . ; strike the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." In Christ's application of this passage, the faithful shepherd who will be cruelly put to death by his own people, is Himself; the timid sheep fleeing in alarm and scattering when their shepherd becomes the victim of wanton outrage, symbolize the Apostles, whose faith, though so lively, was unable to resist the shock of the terrible events they would witness. To reassure and console them beforehand, the Good Shepherd at once promises that He will not abandon them and that He will gather them about Him again as soon as circumstances permit: "But after I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." In that province, where He and His little flock had been so happy together, He would gather

[268] Matt. 26:31 f.; Mark 14:27 f.; Luke 22:31 f.

[269] Matt. 18:6–9; 24:10; Mark 4:17; Luke 7:23, etc. ,

[270] Very significant in this passage are the words πάντες ὑμεῖς of St. Matthew (Vulg., *omnes vos*), πάντες of St. Mark (*omnes*).

[271] Zach. 13:7.

His scattered sheep and would rejoice their hearts at His triumph. This, of course, does not exclude the consolations He will grant them at Jerusalem by His first appearances to them. Again let us remark how carefully our Lord connects the announcement of His Resurrection with that of His Passion and death.

Then turning to Peter, Christ said to him: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren." [272] These are words of evident importance from the dogmatic standpoint. By them Christ made a magnificent promise to His Apostle, a promise similar to the one which had formerly rewarded his glorious confession.[273] But in the present case the promise is veiled; it presupposes, for Simon Peter and the other Apostles, moral dangers of the utmost gravity, since it shows Satan striving to destroy them. As in the case of holy Job,[274] the prince of devils is regarded as asking and obtaining from God permission to tempt the eleven faithful Apostles, that he might take them as he had taken Judas. He wished to pass them through a sieve, that is, to employ violent means to shake their faith and thus destroy the Church of Christ in its very foundations. But Christ had already met Satan's petition and efforts by another prayer, and He again opposes him by personal, all-powerful efforts to save His followers, or rather, in the first place, to save the head of the Apostolic body. The change of pronoun is remarkable. "Satan hath desired to have you" (plural); "but I have prayed for thee." All are endangered by the devil's snares, yet it is especially for Peter that Christ prayed. It was urgently important that Peter's faith should not fail.

[272] Luke 22: 31 f.
[273] Matt. 16: 16–19.
[274] Job 1: 6–12; 2: 1–7.

What follows is no less significant. Our Lord knows that His prayer is heard immediately; but His last words insinuate a fall, on Peter's part, that will be predicted in very plain terms, but will be only transitory, and will not break the bonds that attach the Apostle to his Master. Peter will promptly rise again, and he is commissioned to strengthen and establish his brother-Apostles, and thereby the whole of the faithful, in the faith. The Acts of the Apostles shows him admirably engaged in this work, speaking, doing, fearlessly exposing himself to danger, imperturbably filling the rôle which the Savior had confided to him. We have most certainly in this present passage a text parallel to the *"Tu es Petrus,"* with similar force and clearness establishing the primacy of St. Peter as head of the Church of Christ, his doctrinal infallibility, and the transmission of this twofold privilege to his successors, the popes.[275]

Peter understood that the Savior, while conferring wonderful prerogatives upon him, called into question his complete fidelity. Heeding only the enthusiasm of his love, he replied from the depth of his heart with this ardent protest: "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and to death. Although all shall be scandalized in Thee, I will never be scandalized."[276] His words were sincere; but he made the mistake of presuming too much upon his own strength, upon putting himself above the other Apostles, and upon believing more in his faithfulness than in the sovereign word of Christ. Jesus, who knew him better than he knew himself, merely answers—the third of the predictions mentioned above—: "Amen I say to thee, to-day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice." The Master does not now limit

[275] See the treatise *De Ecclesia* in the theologies; especially Bellarmine, *Controv.*, III, *De Rom. Pontif.*, book IV, chap. 2–7.

[276] On this incident, cf. Matt. 26: 33–35; Mark 14: 29–31; Luke 22: 33 f; John 13: 36–38. The two first Synoptics give us most of the details.

Himself to an insinuation, but in precise and categorical terms affirms the Apostle's proximate and repeated denial. The double cockcrow is a detail peculiar to St. Mark, who learned the fact from St. Peter himself. It was an aggravating circumstance, because the Apostle, thus warned, should have been the more watchful, or, at least, should have repented as soon as he heard the cock's strident cry the first time.[277]

As Jesus held to His prediction, so, too, did Peter hold to his protest, nay, even made it stronger. In his impetuous ardor he said: "Though I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee." Nor did he limit himself to these few words; but, as St. Mark says, using a very expressive phrase: [278] "He spoke the more vehemently."

Impelled by Peter's example, and deeply afflicted over the Savior's doubt of their constancy, the other Apostles with equal vigor declared that they were resolved to undergo death rather than be unfaithful to so good a Master. Christ let them talk, so as not to sadden them still more. At this time they were too disturbed to comprehend His warnings and to weigh them. He then changed the subject of conversation and reminded them of the happy period when He first sent them to preach the glad tidings through Palestine, especially through Galilee, and asked them: "When I sent you without purse and scrip and shoes,[279] did you want anything? But they said:

[277] The third night watch, extending from midnight to three o'clock, was called by the Greeks ἀλεκτοροφωνία, "cockcrow," because it was at that time the cock cried out its morning song. On the basis of this fact, some commentators are of opinion that our Lord was referring to that special part of the night which was known to the Latins as the *gallicinium* (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, X, 21; Ammianus Marcellinus, XXII; Juvenal, IX, 107 f.). But we prefer to understand our Lord's words in the general sense given them in the Syriac version: Before the night passes.

[278] Ἐκπερίσσως ἐλάλει (Vulg., *amplius loquebatur*). Literally: "He spoke intemperately," with his customary vehemence.

[279] Matt. 10:5–10; Mark 6:8 f.; Luke 9:3.

Nothing." [280] In fact, at that period their Master was very popular, and everywhere a lively friendliness was shown his envoys, who did not need to burden themselves with provisions or superfluous baggage. But in the future, all this would change, as our Lord explains to them: "Now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a scrip; and he that hath not, let him sell his coat, and buy a sword. For I say to you, that this that is written must yet be fulfilled in Me: And with the wicked was he reckoned. For the things concerning Me have an end." No longer able to count on a generous hospitality, nor upon acts of friendliness, but everywhere finding themselves in a hostile country,[281] the preachers of the gospel will have to provide themselves with money, clothing, and food, even weapons, to safeguard themselves from the dangers that will threaten their lives. Their Master is already outlawed, and the same lot awaits them. Buy a sword to defend themselves! Surely nothing was more contrary to the Savior's principles than the thought of converting the world in the manner of Mohammed, by using open violence. This advice of the Savior was purely symbolic and meant that the Apostles should expect hatred and all sorts of dangers.

The prophecy "With the wicked was he reckoned" is taken from the fifty-third chapter of Isaias,[282] who so eloquently prophesies the sufferings and humiliations of the Messias. "It was necessary," according to the divine plan, that this detail, like so many others, should be perfectly fulfilled. Therefore we shall see the Savior within a few hours crucified between two thieves.

The Apostles interpreted literally and very frankly the words warning them to arm themselves for defense, and they

[280] St. Luke (*22*: 34–38) is the only one to relate this part of the discourse after the supper.

[281] Cf. Matt. 24: 9–13; Mark 13: 9–13; Luke 21: 12–17.

[282] Is. 53: 12.

replied: "Lord, behold here are two swords." Perhaps they had brought them from Galilee, in anticipation of the dangers which their Master and they might encounter at Jerusalem. We shall soon see one of these little swords [283] in St. Peter's hand at Gethsemani. "It is enough," answered our Lord, thus indicating that He did not wish to pursue the conversation further on this point, since His thought was so poorly understood.

IV. Discourse after the Last Supper; Christ's Sacerdotal Prayer

After the conversation just recounted between our Lord and the Apostles, He spoke to them the incomparable discourse which fills three chapters in the Fourth Gospel.[284]

In those pages we have a surprising mixture of divine sublimity and gentle simplicity. Most of the details are easily understood. They may be grasped without difficulty, or at least one thinks so at the first reading; but, upon trying to penetrate more deeply into their meaning, we discover the very loftiness of Heaven and we become convinced that only a God could have so spoken. Even in the Fourth Gospel, where so many sublime passages are to be found, nowhere, unless in the Prologue,[285] do we find passages comparable with this discourse and the prayer that follows it. Therein theological riches abound, especially proofs of the divinity of Christ.[286]

The terms "Farewell Address" or "Last Will and Testament" of the Savior express the dominant idea around which all the other thoughts are grouped. In a few hours Jesus is going to die; before separating from His Apostles, He speaks His last words to them, in the form of consolations, warnings,

[283] In the Greek, μάχαιρα.
[284] John 13:31–16:33.
[285] John 1:1–18.
[286] See Corluy, *Comment. in Evang. S. Joannis*, 2d ed., pp. 392–400.

recommendations. During these brief moments of friendly intercourse, which will not recur under like conditions, feelings arise in His heart and, like a dying person, He pours them forth with ineffable sweetness upon those He loves. Hence that shifting of the thoughts, which is more apparent than real, for, although the logical connection is not plainly discernible, yet not for a moment is it broken, and we can follow this gentle undulation of the thought, which seems to drop a subject only to resume it a little further on.[287] The central idea of the discourse is that of the approaching separation; and into that idea the other thoughts are grafted.[288]

Naturally this idea cast a shadow of sadness over the whole discourse; but the hope or rather the certainty of meeting together again, and also Christ's firm confidence in final victory added a ray of brightness. The tone is grave, full of feeling, loving, solemn. Throughout the discourse the Savior speaks as though His Passion were already a thing of the past and as if His present and future disciples had already reaped its happy results. It is all set forth in a truly psychological order. After speaking the farewell word,[289] Christ at once consoles His Apostles by disclosing the blessed consequences that will come to them and to Him from the separation.[290] Then He exhorts them to remain closely united, both to Him and to one another, in bonds of lasting charity.[291] In fine, He instructs them about what awaits them in the future, and offsets the sorrowful predictions by glowing promises of success and happiness.[292] Faith is the heart of the discourse in chapter

[287] Christ speaks five times of the Paraclete (John 14:16 f., 25 f.; 15:26; 16:7–15, 23–25); three times of the relations between the Church and the world (14:22–24; 15:18–25; 16:1–3), and again and again refers to His going away and His return.

[288] Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean*, p. 273.

[289] John 15:31–38; particularly verse 33.

[290] John 14:1–31.

[291] John 15:1–27.

[292] John 16:1–33.

fourteen, love in chapter fifteen, hope in chapter sixteen.

The words "Arise, let us go hence" [293] divide the discourse into two parts. The first part [294] is somewhat more informal; it is a sort of dialogue with the Apostles. Thomas, Philip, and Jude, one after the other, ask the Master questions, which He answers in a most kindly manner. The second part is graver and more solemn: except for two interruptions by the Apostles, Christ alone is speaking.[295]

A short exordium announces the separation now so near, and points out its happy consequences:

"Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God also will glorify Him in Himself; and immediately will He glorify Him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You shall seek Me, and as I said to the Jews: Whither I go you cannot come; so I say to you now. A new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another." [296]

The beginning is superb. The Evangelist, who does not relate the institution of the Eucharist, connects the beginning of the discourse immediately with the departure of Judas. Up to that moment, the traitor's presence had oppressed the Savior's heart and hindered its outpouring; after dismissing Judas, He is freer to pour forth His soul in sublime feeling. In these first lines, the tone is joyous and triumphant. Christ

[293] John 14:31.

[294] John 13:31–14:31.

[295] Fillion, *op. cit.*, p. 274. On the authenticity of the discourse, see *infra*, Appendix IX. We regret that we can do no more than touch upon the chief details of this masterpiece of our Lord's eloquence. We refer the reader to the commentaries on St. John's Gospel and to the following works: Keppler, *Unseres Herrn Trost; Erklärung der Abschiedsreden und des hohenpriesterlichen Gebetes Jesu;* Swete, *The Last Discourse and Prayer of Our Lord, a Study of St. John 14–17.*

[296] John 13:31–35.

considers His Passion as virtually accomplished; He speaks as though the holy glory which it would obtain for Him and for God, His Father, were already produced. The fivefold repetition of the word "glorify" in this song of victory, emphasizes the thought. God will glorify the Son of Man; but the chief purpose of Christ's human existence had been to glorify His Father: this admirable exchange of honors they mutually procure for each other.

But in order to go to Heaven and there enjoy the glory reserved for Him, Christ must leave His beloved Apostles. With great tenderness He prepares His "little children," as He calls them, for this hard separation. He reminds them that He had already [297] announced His departure to His enemies; but it was in the form of a threat, for He was then speaking of an absolute rupture between them and Him, whereas He will leave His disciples only for a time, as He presently tells them at greater length. Meanwhile He urges them to bind themselves closely together by the practice of brotherly love: "Love one another." He stresses this precept; first He mentions it, then He repeats it, specifying the manner in which it should be practiced, then He again repeats it to show its extreme importance. It is "a new commandment," He says. Yet it was already an integral part of the Mosaic Law.[298] But in the practice and reality of Jewish life, it scarcely exceeded the limits of a restrained kindliness, while here it is broadened, supplemented, truly made new. Was it not an unheard-of love, for anyone to give his life for his neighbor, after the example of Christ Himself? The Christians faithfully obeyed this beautiful commandment. "See how they love one another," said the pagans,[299] astonished at this sight, so rare among themselves.

[297] John 7: 34.
[298] Lev. 19: 18; Cf. Matt. 22: 36–39.
[299] Tertullian, *Apol.*, XXXIX.

The Master, seeing His disciples greatly disturbed by the desolating predictions He had just made, offers to their faith various reasons for consolation. The thought as well as the language continues rising to ever loftier heights. First, He assures them that His present departure is not a departure without hope of return. It is to Heaven, to His Father, that He goes, and will there prepare a place for them, and henceforth He will live mystically in their midst in a very close association:

"Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father's house there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you; because I go to prepare a place for you. And if I shall go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself; that where I am, you also may be. And whither I go you know, and the way you know." [300]

With what gentleness and powerful reasoning He reassures them! He wishes them to have a firm confidence in Him, as in God Himself, since He is God. Never can He consent to live without them; therefore, even before the everlasting meeting in Heaven, He will be able to rejoin them on earth, since He is perpetually present in His Church in a very real, even though invisible, way.

At this point, the Apostle Thomas interrupted the Savior, asking for enlightenment upon His last words. "Lord," he said, "we know not whither Thou goest. And how can we know the way?" This question, asked in the name of all, is surprisingly naïve, since Christ had just said that He was going to His Father, plainly meaning Heaven. But the Apostles were unwilling to believe that their Master was about to leave them, die, and ascend to Heaven. The Savior's reply is of remarkable depth and beauty. In a few words He indicates

[300] John 14: 1–4.

the goal of His journey—He is going "to the Father"—and the way that must be followed to go with Him.

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by Me. If you had known Me, you would without doubt have known My Father also; and from henceforth you shall know Him, and you have seen Him."

He is the way: this is the principal word, which the two other words help to explain. Jesus is not satisfied with pointing out the way, as an ordinary guide would do. He is Himself the way. He is in His own person the truth which we must believe, the higher life which we must assimilate to ourselves.

Another naïve interruption follows, coming this time from Philip: "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." The Apostle took the words "You have seen Him" literally and desired their outward realization. Jesus replied:

"Have I been so long a time with you; and have you not known Me? Philip, he that seeth Me, seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you, I speak not of Myself. But the Father who abideth in Me, He doth the works. Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? Otherwise believe for the very works' sake."

More and more our Lord relies upon the proofs of His identity with the Father, upon His participation in the divine nature. To see Him is to see also the Father. He is in the Father, and the Father is in Him, because they have one and the same substance. Frequently the Fourth Gospel makes appeal to the twofold testimony of His words (His teaching) and His works (especially His miracles) to prove the divinity of His nature and mission.[301] He speaks and acts as God,

[301] John 3:2; 5:17–36; 6:27; 7:16; 8:18, 26–29; 10:38; 11:4, 25, 41–42, 47; 12:49; 15:24.

and the Apostles had been so slow in grasping this truth. Philip deserved this fatherly rebuke the more so as he was among the first to be associated with the Savior's life.[302]

The series of consolations we have just considered might be entitled: Christ and God the Father. The next series might be summed up in the words: Christ and the Apostles. Even after outwardly leaving His chosen disciples, Christ will manifest His invisible presence to them by many undeniable events. First, He will give them power to perform even more brilliant works than His and He will hear all their prayers:

"Amen, amen I say to you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do; and greater than these shall he do. Because I go to the Father; and whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, that will I do; that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask Me anything in My name, that will I do." [303]

"He that believeth in Me," says Christ. This is the indispensable condition. But what wonders it is able to produce! As to Christ's miracles, the Evangelists reveal their beauty and power, and their great numbers. The earth had never beheld the like. Yet the divine Miracle-worker promises the Apostles that they will perform still greater ones. We know that St. Peter and St. Paul, for example, did miracles which the Savior Himself does not appear to have performed.[304] What a lengthy list we might make if, taking the words "He that believeth" in their general sense, we were to consult the annals of the Church on this point! What eloquence there is in the mere names of Gregory Thaumaturgus and Francis Xavier! But probably the Savior's promise in this instance went far beyond these particular miracles. It concerned chiefly the preaching of the Apostles and the first Christian

[302] John 1:43 f.
[303] John 14:12–14.
[304] Acts 5:15; 13:8–11; 19:12, etc.

missionaries, which surpassed the Savior's preaching in the vast extent of its field and in the brilliance of its success.

From the seat of His glory, Christ will add to this another precious favor. Whenever the Apostles, and likewise to a certain extent other believers, need a special grace, they have but to ask it of God in Jesus' name. We shall again hear this promise more than once in the course of the farewell discourse.[305] This is what has led the Church to conclude most of her official prayers with the beautiful words "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . ." But the Savior's desire goes farther. To pray in His name, is to do so in His place, so to speak; it is to ask what He Himself would ask of God; it is to profit by His infinite merits.

Secondly, Christ promises the Apostles to send them His Holy Spirit, who will remain perpetually with them:

> "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you forever. The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth Him not nor knoweth Him. But you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you and shall be in you." [306]

This consolation is to be given them as a reward of their faith. This fact presupposes on their part a quality of superior order, a generous and sincere love, showing itself in strict obedience to the Savior's commandments. The word "Paraclete" here means the Holy Ghost, the third person of the Trinity. It is based on the Greek word *Parakletos,*[307] which etymologically means an advocate, then, by extension, a comforter. Our Lord speaks of sending "another Paraclete," because He Himself had been His Apostles' first advocate. Since

[305] John 15:16; 16:23, 24, 26.

[306] John 14:15–17.

[307] Παράκλητος (Vulg. *Paraclitus*), from παρά and καλέω, "he whom one calls to one's side."

He is obliged to leave them, He will have Himself replaced by the divine Spirit in His Church; but the world, which our Lord more than once condemns in the course of this address, is excluded from sharing in the lights and graces of the Holy Spirit. Between them there is no affinity; the world drives away the Spirit of Jesus by its total lack of faith and its evil deeds.

However, the Savior's love for His Apostles is not yet satisfied. Even after delegating to them, in His name, so powerful an advocate and so tender a comforter as the divine Paraclete, He Himself will come and take up His abode with them in a permanent way. A few moments before He called them His "little children"; He continues speaking to them as a father:

"I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more. But you see Me, because I live, and you shall live. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me. And he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father; and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." [308]

Soon the Apostles will no longer see their Master; this thought is still the dominant note. Yet He will always be with them, because He will mystically fix His abode in their midst and in the midst of the Church which they represent. It is not of His second coming at the end of the world that He is here speaking. "I come to you," He says in the present tense, according to the Greek text. Although they will see Him no more with bodily eyes, they will be able to contemplate Him with the eyes of the soul. Furthermore, He will manifest His presence by His protection at every moment, and especially in the hour of danger. "I am in My Father, and you in Me,

[308] John 14: 18–24.

and I in you." This synthesis indicates a very close union between Christ and His disciples, for them a most tender and noble one. Together they will form a single organism, He being the head and chief, and they the members. But again the Savior demands a boundless love from His Apostles, and in return He promises them His own love and that of His Father.

When Christ reached this point of His discourse, He was again interrupted. Judas (otherwise Lebbaeus or Thaddeus), the Apostle with the three names,[309] referring to the Savior's last words, asked Him: "Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself to us, and not to the world?" He had supposed the Savior was speaking of a limited manifestation, which He would reserve for His disciples alone, as contrasted with the world. But, like most of the Jews, he thought the Messias was to manifest Himself to the whole world, in all the trappings of His glory and might. Jesus replied:

"If anyone love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and will make our abode with him. He that loveth Me not, keepeth not My words. And the word which you have heard, is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me." [310]

In this reply, Christ does scarcely more than repeat the declaration that gave rise to the Apostle's question. Yet substantially He gives the desired explanation: since, to merit being loved by the Father and the Son and enjoying their ineffable presence, one must first testify love and obedience to them, it is evident that the world is unable to fulfil this twofold condition. Not for the world will Heaven descend and dwell upon earth.

Our Lord then summed up the first part of His discourse in the following lines, promising the Apostles peace in the

[309] See Volume II, page 263.
[310] John 14:23 f.

Holy Spirit, pointing out the advantages to come from His departure, and again affirming His entire resignation to all the designs of His heavenly Father:

"These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid. You have heard that I said to you: I go away, and I come unto you. If you loved Me, you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father; for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass; that, when it shall come to pass, you may believe. I will not now speak many things with you. For the prince of this world cometh, and in Me he hath not anything. But that the world may know, that I love the Father; and as the Father hath given Me commandment, so do I." [311]

Because of the Apostles' many preconceptions and the defects of their previous education, Christ's instruction of them was necessarily imperfect. But the Holy Ghost will come and supplement it. This will be done in two ways. The Savior had planted into the minds of the Twelve the seed of all Christian truths. Under the fructifying action of His Spirit that seed will reach maturity. Moreover, the Divine Paraclete will recall to the Apostles' minds, whenever they have need, such or such words, such or such precepts of their Master, which they had not well understood at first. Meanwhile Jesus gives them and leaves to them, as a valuable inheritance, His peace, His own peace, as opposed to the false peace of the world. Amid every sort of danger and adversity threatening them, it will bring them perfect calm. He tells them that, instead of abandoning themselves to discouragement on account of His de-

[311] John 14: 25–31.

parture, they should rejoice at the thought that He is leaving them only to return to His Father and to enjoy in Heaven a happiness and glory in which they are sure to have a part, since they love Him.

The words "The Father is greater than I" do not indicate, as the Arians and modern Rationalists maintain, a real inferiority of the Son. The great doctors of the Church, and after them the theologians, have most clearly demonstrated this. Our Lord was speaking as the Son of Man; naturally, from that standpoint He placed His Father above Himself. Or, as has been said, "the Father is greater than the Son, because the very name of Father is greater than that of Son." [312] As to "the prince of this world," Satan,[313] although he will play so important a part in Christ's Passion, this does not mean that he has the least claim upon Christ—another clear assertion of the Savior's perfect holiness [314]—but God allows him to do so for the realization of His plans of salvation. "He cometh," therefore, and the Savior calmly awaits him, consenting to let Himself be overcome for the moment by him, that He may thus show how greatly He loves His Father, whose will He is happy to do, even though it calls for the sacrifice of His life.

After a short pause Jesus said: "Arise, let us go hence." Until then He and the Apostles had remained on their couches. Christ arose first, then the others, and together they left the Cenacle and set out toward Gethsemani, going around the eastern slope of Mount Sion and descending to the Cedron valley.[315] The rest of the discourse took place along the road.[316]

[312] Council of Sardica. Consult the theologies, especially Franzelin, *Tractatus de Deo Trino,* 1869, pp. 165–170.

[313] John 12:31.

[314] Cf. John 8:29, 46.

[315] Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible,* plates 14 and 15.

[316] Many authors suppose that our Lord, after rising from table, remained standing in the Cenacle with the Apostles until the end of the discourse and the

The simple words, "Let us go hence," show, on Christ's part, the courageous spontaneity, the complete freedom, the generous spirit of sacrifice with which He took this decisive step. He goes forth to meet suffering, humiliation, and death as though He were going to victory and honor.

Here we enter upon the second part of the farewell address; we find the same loftiness of thought and feelings, the same tender accent, the same restrained emotion. The two chapters of the Fourth Gospel containing this part of the discourse [317] correspond roughly to the two divisions of the subject treated. The first section considers the future relations of the Apostles with the Lord Jesus, with one another, and with the world. It may be summed up in these three words: Union, Communion, Disunion.[318]

The idea of the union between Christ and His Apostles has already been spoken of. But in that passage the chief part was our Lord's, whereas in the present passage the more active part devolves upon the disciples. This union, which is so fruitful in blessings, should exist more than ever after His departure. It is expressed in the form of a striking allegory, that of the vine and the branches,[319] which is rightly praised for its vigor and charm:

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me, that beareth not fruit, He will take away; and every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it, that it may bring forth

prayer that followed it. But it is difficult to explain that Christ would give orders to leave the room, and would not at once have had the orders carried out. That district of Jerusalem was not thickly peopled; although it was the night of the Pasch and although other groups might be going to the Temple or elsewhere, it may be supposed that the Savior was able to continue His discourse without being greatly disturbed.

[317] John, chaps. 15 and 16.

[318] Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 518.

[319] On the difference between an allegory and a parable, see Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Matthieu*, p. 258.

more fruit. Now you are clean by reason of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine; you the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask whatsoever you will, and it shall be done unto you. In this is My Father glorified; that you bring forth very much fruit, and become My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, I also have loved you. Abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love; as I also have kept My Father's commandments, and do abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled." [320]

The idea that our Lord wished to emphasize is quite clear; and He Himself provides a commentary by His practical applications, now gentle, now threatening. Upon this symbolic vine, as upon a material trunk, are branches of two kinds, which are treated in two different ways. The vinedresser ruthlessly cuts off those that are barren; the others he merely prunes, so that they may bear more fruit. Christ tells the Apostles that this useful operation of pruning has been performed on them by the training they received from Him. He then speaks of the branches, which are closely and constantly united to the trunk. This is the principal lesson of the allegory, and it is repeated in various forms. Woe to the branch that separates itself from the vine! Blessed is he who remains attached to Christ! But, since the question is of a branch endowed with mental and moral life, such a branch is united to Christ by love, obedient love. The frescoes in the Catacombs often picture this mystical vine, which impressed the early

[320] John 15: 1–11.

Christians almost as forcibly as did the parable of the Good Shepherd.

The Savior next passes to His disciples' relations with one another. At the beginning and at the close of this paragraph, He states the dominant idea: "Love one another." The body of the paragraph contains beautiful developments of this thought:

"This is My commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends, if you do the things that I command you. I will not now call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth. But I have called you friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father, I have made known to you. You have not chosen Me; but I have chosen you and have appointed you, that you should go and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain; that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you. These things I command you, that you love one another." [321]

At the beginning of this discourse,[322] our Lord had said that the precept of brotherly love, imitating His example, is a special, distinctive commandment, which He particularly insisted on. Therefore He here returns to the idea and stresses it: "This is My commandment. . . . These things I command you. . . ." We feel His whole heart go forth to His Apostles as He calls them friends, and shows the loftiness and beauty of that title. How charmingly He reminds them of the condescension with which He himself had formed that holy friendship! He it was who took the initiative; He, so unutterably great and perfect, who chose the disciples for friends; and He did so for their sakes, to help them bring forth abundant fruit. Let them, therefore, remain united, as He is united to them.

[321] John 15: 12–17.
[322] John 13: 34.

At once the picture darkens. The Apostles of Christ cannot remain as strangers in the world, since it is their mission to convert the world, being the salt of the earth that arrests its corruption, and the light that illumines the souls of men.[323] But this wicked, unbelieving world, after hating and persecuting their Master, will surely hate and mistreat them, too. Yet, being loved by God and by the Savior, and being sustained by their love for one another, they will have less dread of that cruel and unjust hostility:

"If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated Me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own. But because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember My word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. He that hateth Me, hateth My Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father. But that the word may be fulfilled which is written in their law: They hated me without cause." [324]

Thus did our Lord beforehand strengthen His disciples against the hatred of the world. The last expression, which so plainly declares the inexcusable character of the world's hatred toward Christ, is taken from the Psalms.[325] At the beginning of the paragraph, the fivefold repetition of "world" is very effective, as it vividly emphasizes the fatal antagonism between the world and the Church. Then the Savior's allusion

[323] Matt. 5: 13–16.

[324] John 15: 18–25.

[325] Ps. 24: 19; 68: 5. The word "Law" is here used in a broad sense, including all the books of the Old Testament.

to the inutility of His preaching and miracles, in solemn, rhythmic language, is very moving. Not to believe in Him, despite the most certain marks of His divine mission, constitutes the great sin of the world. And therefore the words in which Christ condemns it, are among the severest He ever uttered. What had the good Master done to be treated with such ingratitude?

As our Lord repeatedly does in this discourse, He adds to this denunciation a word of consolation for His disciples. Those who hate Him will not succeed in compromising the success of His work. In its defense He will have two kinds of witnesses, whose voices will not be powerless: one witness a divine one, the Holy Ghost; the others, human witnesses, whole-heartedly devoted, the Apostles:

"But when the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall give testimony of Me. And you shall give testimony, because you are with Me from the beginning." [326]

Chapter sixteen of St. John's Gospel contains another section of the second part of the farewell discourse. Therein we find three principal ideas. Christ, in more explicit terms and with greater development, repeats His promise to send the Divine Paraclete to the Apostles; He then announces His own return; lastly, He recapitulates the whole discourse. The first lines are a sort of introduction. They show us the Apostles as a target of the world's persecution, as the Master had recently foretold. He takes up this thought again, so that the Apostles, being duly forewarned, will feel less disturbed when the calamity strikes them:

"These things have I spoken to you that you may not be scandalized. They will put you out of the synagogues. Yea, the hour

[326] John 15:26 f.

cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth a service to God. And these things will they do to you, because they have not known the Father nor Me. But these things I have told you, that when the hour shall come, you may remember that I told you of them. But I told you not these things from the beginning, because I was with you." [327]

The words, "Whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth a service to God" presuppose, on the part of the persecutors, fanatical rage and hatred, which will scruple at no cruelty in order to be satisfied.[328] The last words possess a delicate charm. Although Christ had long before told His disciples that their mission would not be without danger, He had not stressed this point, since He did not wish to alarm them too much. Further, so long as He was with them, they had nothing to fear, for His gentle and powerful presence was enough to comfort them.

Then our Lord returns to His promise regarding the sending of the Holy Ghost. At first the thought is somewhat general:

"And now I go to Him that sent Me, and none of you asketh Me: Whither goest Thou? But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart. But I tell you the truth: it is expedient to you that I go; for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you." [329]

"Where goest Thou?" is a quite natural question for children or friends to ask their father or friend who tells them of an intended journey. In the Cenacle, St. Peter and St. James had asked the Master this question,[330] but in a superficial way. Jesus wished them to repeat it now, with loftier views and in accord with the deeper meaning which they could

[327] John 16: 1–5.
[328] Cf. Acts 23: 12; Gal. 1: 13 f., etc.
[329] John 16: 5–7.
[330] John 13: 36; 14: 5.

glimpse after His explanations. "It is as though He said: You are not concerned about whither I go; to what place, what glory, what happiness; but you are sad. He reproaches them because of the little attention they give to what He does and the little love they have for Him, since they are concerned only about themselves and their own grief." [331] And His going away is also to their advantage, because it is an indispensable condition for the sending of the Paraclete.

What Jesus now says about the coming and action of the Holy Ghost concerns the world and the Apostles. With regard to the world, the language is pregnant with well-merited threats:

"When He is come, He will convince the world of sin and of justice and of judgment. Of sin, because they believed not in Me. And of justice, because I go to the Father, and you shall see Me no longer. And of judgment, because the prince of this world is already judged." [332]

In many of these lines we recognize the rhythm and parallelism of Hebraic poetry. On the three points mentioned, it will be easy for the Paraclete to convince the world of its great culpability. He will prove to it that "the whole world is seated in wickedness"; [333] that it has acted criminally toward Christ, the Just One, for whom God the Father prepares a triumphal entry into Heaven; that it deserves a severe sentence of condemnation, as does its chief, the devil, whose judgment has already been proclaimed.

But with regard to the Apostles, the Holy Ghost's action will be quite different. With utmost mildness, speaking in Christ's name, He will finish their instructions and training, which thus far had been only begun:

[331] Bossuet, *Méditations sur l'Évangile,* 2d part, 18th day.
[332] John 16:8–11.
[333] See 1 John 5:19.

"I have yet many things to say to you; but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will teach you all truth. For He shall not speak of Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, He shall speak; and the things that are to come, He shall show you. He shall glorify Me; because He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it to you. All things whatsoever the Father hath, are Mine. Therefore I said, that He shall receive of Mine, and show it to you." [334]

The Divine Master, that incomparable educator, had not wished to burden His disciples' minds and memories with instructions they were not yet able to grasp. The Paraclete will complete His work, after bestowing lights and special graces on them. He will teach them "all truth," that is, the full and complete Christian truth in all its extent and without danger of error, so far at least as will be necessary for their future ministry. He will even partly reveal to them the secrets of the future, when such revelation will be profitable for the Church. Let us also note in this passage the forceful way in which is expressed the identity of essence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and also the way in which our Lord connects everything with Himself. Even after His return to heaven, He will remain the center of the Church.

In the first part of this discourse,[335] our Lord connected the promise of His return with the coming of the Paraclete. Here He does the same thing again, with further developments. He again refers to the griefs of the time and says that they will shortly be changed into joys. "A little while," He says, "and now you shall not see Me; and again a little while, and you shall see Me; because I go to the Father." Jesus here used a mysterious form of speech, paradoxical in appearance. In fact, a few hours later, when death snatches Him from them, His disciples will see Him no more. Then, between His

[334] John 16: 12–15.
[335] John 14: 18–20.

Resurrection and Ascension, they will have the happiness of meeting Him again. In both cases there will be only "a little while." These words give rise to a lively scene. Some of the Apostles ask one another in a low voice:

"What is this that He saith to us: A little while, and you shall not see Me; and again a little while, and you shall see Me, and, because I go to the Father? What is this that He saith, A little while? We know not what He speaketh." [336]

They are puzzled by the expression "a little while," [337] and avow their perplexity with their usual frankness. Jesus, hearing their remark, or aware of it by His supernatural knowledge, repeats the enigmatic phrase and gives at least a partial explanation of it. Without stating exactly the duration of the two "little whiles," He clearly characterizes, so far as concerned the Apostles, each of the periods thus designated. His explanation contains a double prophecy, announcing great evils for the present time and great joys for the future:

"Of this do you inquire among yourselves, because I said: A little while, and you shall not see Me; and again a little while, and you shall see Me. Amen, amen I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, hath sorrow because her hour is come; but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So also you now indeed have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you." [338]

The period of sorrow is described with accumulated expressions, which indicate a profound desolation, both inner and

[336] John 16: 17.

[337] The Greek has merely μικρόν (Vulg., *modicum*), "a little"; the word "time" is understood.

[338] John 16: 19–22.

outward. The world's insolent joy, contrasted with the Apostles' chagrin and mourning, helps to make the prediction still more poignant. It is the same cause that produces the grief and the joy: for the world will congratulate itself and rejoice, thinking itself rid of Him whom it regarded as a mortal enemy. But a lifelike comparison, taken from the family circle, well sets forth the quickness with which the disciples' sorrow will be changed into rejoicing. The pangs of childbirth, the direct result of original sin, are often mentioned in the Bible in a proverbial way.[339] They are severe, but promptly give way to lively joy when the mother presses to her heart the son she has just brought forth. In the same way will it be for the Apostles, who, when their Master appears to them alive after His Resurrection, will be filled with an abiding happiness that no one can take away from them.

The Savior next mentions two other most valuable advantages, which the period inaugurated by His Resurrection will procure for the Apostles: a perfect knowledge of the truth and an irresistible power of intercession—two favors that had already been expressly promised.

"In that day you shall not ask Me anything. Amen, amen I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it you. Hitherto you have not asked anything in My name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full." [340]

"These things I have spoken to you in proverbs. The hour cometh when I will no more speak to you in proverbs, but will show you plainly of the Father. In that day you shall ask in My name; and I say not to you that I will ask the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth

[339] Gen. 3:16; Is. 13:8; 21:3; Jer. 4:31; 6:24; Osee 13:13; Micheas 4:9, etc.

[340] John 16:23 f.

from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and I go to the Father." [341]

Throughout this discourse, Christ had made use of figurative expressions—His going away, His return, the vine, the woman in labor, the *modicum,* etc.—and many of them had clouded the thought. In a few days, however, the Master will make important revelations to the Apostles without any veil, especially through the intermediary of the Holy Ghost. What He here declares about His divine nature and His relations with God the Father, is particularly remarkable. There is a whole *Credo* in the last two lines. The eternal generation of the Word, His Incarnation, the Redemption, and Christ's eternal triumph are all clearly insinuated. The Apostles must have received with deep feeling the assurance that the Father of Jesus loved them, as a reward for the loyal and generous affection they had shown toward His Son. Moreover, as our Lord told them that henceforth He would speak to them plainly, without figures, they thought that moment had come. Interrupting Him, they made this naïve remark: "Behold now Thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now we know that Thou knowest all things, and Thou needest not that any man should ask Thee. By this we believe that Thou camest forth from God." They now suppose they have understood all. Their open candor is most pleasing, combined as it is with so great loyalty. Jesus replied:

"Do you now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, and it is now come, that you shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you shall have distress; but have confidence, I have overcome the world." [342]

[341] John 16: 25–28.
[342] John 16: 31–33.

A moment before the Savior praised the Apostles' faith, thanking them and encouraging them; and of a sudden, when they mention it, He reminds them that it is still unsteady. His purpose, in the face of the terrible approaching events, is to show them how greatly they should distrust their own weakness. He next repeats the sorrowful prediction that, in a few hours, they were going to abandon Him shamefully and scatter, each for himself. Courageously and proudly, however, He says that even then He will not be alone. He is in need of no human assistance. He is constantly aware of the sweet and holy presence of His Divine Father; that suffices Him. After again promising them "peace in Him," despite outward tribulations, He encourages them to maintain a firm confidence, because He has "overcome the world." It has been quite rightly said that there is incomparable force and beauty in this cry of triumph with which the discourse closes. Yet what is stranger in appearance than such an assertion at the very moment when the series of our Lord's outward humiliations and defeats is about to begin? But so sure is He of final victory that He looks upon it as already accomplished.

This ending is sublime; but the Divine Master presently gives us one still more sublime. Standing still and raising His eyes to Heaven, He slowly spoke, in Aramaic, the wonderful prayer which was long ago called "Christ's sacerdotal prayer," because it came forth from the heart of our Supreme Pontiff, who was about to offer His bloody sacrifice. As Bossuet [343] wrote, "We should silence all creation that we might hear in the depth of His heart the words that Christ addressed to His Father in this intimate and perfect communion." The Synoptic Gospels, especially St. Luke's, at various times mention the Savior's prayers; but, with two exceptions,[344] they do not

[343] *Méditations sur l'Évangile,* part 2, 34th day.

[344] Matt. 11 : 25 f.; 26 : 39, 42. See the parallel passages in the Second and Third Gospels.

quote the words of those prayers. Thanks to St. John, we possess the sacerdotal prayer in its authentic form, as it came from Christ's heart pouring itself out to God. Although its expression is very simple throughout and although it nowhere takes on the tone of dogma, its theological richness is immense.[345] The triumphal accent which resounds at the close of the farewell discourse continues to be heard.

The prayer may be divided into three parts: Christ first prays for himself; then He prays for His Apostles and for the whole Church. Never has anything more beautiful been written in human language.

For Himself as Son of Man, Christ asks of God the glory which He has so well merited by His obedience and His trials:

"Father, the hour is come: glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee. As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now glorify Thou Me, O Father, with Thyself, with the glory which I had, before the world was, with Thee." [346]

Six times Jesus repeats the name of the Father, which opens this filial prayer. Some time before, He said to God: "Glorify Thy name." [347] Now it is His own glory that He asks God to establish, promising to labor for the Father's glory. This reciprocity was mentioned at the beginning of the farewell discourse.[348] Christ here develops it, pointing out what He receives from God—an absolute, universal sovereignty over mankind, that He may procure eternal salvation for all who become worthy—and what He will Himself do for

[345] Corluy, *Comment. in Evangel. S. Joannis*, 2d ed., p. 413.
[346] John 17: 1–5.
[347] John 12: 28.
[348] John 13: 31 f.

God, by everywhere spreading a knowledge of Him and of His Christ. To know God and Jesus Christ, His Son, to know them by love as well as by faith is the loftiest definition of Christian life. The Savior dwells upon His fidelity in performing His mission in this regard, and He establishes His right to the glory of Heaven. He has led a life of stern sacrifices and performed, to the last detail, the work His Father had confided to Him. Let God, therefore, restore to Him the primordial glory of which He freely stripped Himself in becoming man!

The longer and more touching part of Jesus' prayer is for His beloved Apostles, who were to continue His work:

"I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou hast given Me out of the world. Thine they were, and to Me Thou gavest them; and they have kept Thy word. Now they have known that all things which Thou hast given Me are from Thee; because the words which Thou gavest Me, I have given to them, and they have received them and have known in very deed that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me." [349]

In these first lines our Lord indicates the two powerful reasons on which He bases this portion of His petition. The Apostles had been faithful to God, faithful also to Christ, His Son, to whom He had given them as co-workers. After this *captatio benevolentiae,* Christ passes to the intercession strictly so called:

"I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given Me; because they are Thine. And all things are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am not in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy name whom Thou hast given Me; that they may be one, as We also are. While I was with them, I kept them in Thy name. Those whom Thou gavest Me have I kept; and none of them is lost, but the son of per-

[349] John 17:6–8.

dition, that the Scripture may be fulfilled. And now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy filled in themselves. I have given them Thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world; as I also am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil. They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. Sanctify them in truth. Thy word is truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for them do I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth." [350]

In this prayer everything is delicate, gentle, and forceful; each word reveals Christ's love for His Father and for His Apostles. We must not take the words "I pray not for the world" too literally, because the Savior did not exclude the world from His supplications, any more than He excluded it from the merits of His death. He urges Christians to pray for their enemies, and He added example to precept.[351] And a moment later He prays explicitly for the world. In the present case He uses this form of language the better to bring to His Father's attention the disciples, who were the direct and special object of His intercession. He repeats to God that the Apostles belong to them both and that both must needs be concerned for them, since they have labored so sincerely to glorify the Son. Therefore they fully deserve God's protection. The words "All My things are Thine, and Thine are Mine" contain another and undeniable proof of the divinity of Christ.

The prayer continues in short phrases, colored by strong feeling, referring to the circumstances which now make it especially necessary for the Apostles to rely upon the fatherly support and special grace of the Most High. Their Master had thus far been their devoted protector; but He is about to leave them alone in the midst of great perils. Again and again He

[350] John 17:9–19.
[351] Luke 23:34.

says to His heavenly Father that He has received them as a gift from His divine hands and that, as He is now returning to Heaven, He entrusts them to those same almighty hands. Two special favors He asks for them: that, even after the Good Shepherd's departure, there may ever be among the sheep of this mystical flock a holy and perfect harmony, like that which unites the Father and the Son, and that the Apostles be "sanctified," that is, set apart in view of their heavenly office and endowed with the virtues necessary for the perfect performance of their duties. We can sense the Savior's heartfelt sorrow when He mentions "the son of perdition," the traitor Judas, who freely gave himself up to Satan. We also sense our Lord's tenderness when He speaks of the care He has taken of the Apostles to safeguard them from evil, and of His own joy, which He wishes to share with them. Lastly, what a consoling revelation we find in the words, "For them do I sanctify Myself," meaning that He separated Himself from everything to devote Himself wholly to their moral training and the work of Redemption.

In the third part of His prayer, Jesus had in mind all Christians who would form His Church in the course of future ages. Lovingly imposing His hands in blessing upon this mystical spouse, He asks His Father to grant her, as also the Apostles, the precious gift of perfect unity in this world, and eternal glory and happiness in Heaven:

"Not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me; that they all may be one as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given to them; that they may be one, as We also are one: I in them, and Thou in Me; that they may be made perfect in one; and the world may know that Thou hast sent Me and hast loved them as Thou hast also loved Me. Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given

Me may be with Me; that they may see My glory which Thou hast given Me, because Thou hast loved Me before the creation of the world." [352]

First, a union that effects a oneness of minds and hearts, a union resting upon God and cemented by Him. The world is profoundly disunited because the selfishness at the basis of all its acts can create nothing but division. The admirable unity of the Church will be an impressive phenomenon for the world, which, dispite its unbelief, will have to trace the cause of that unity to the Divine Founder of Christianity. When Christ comes to the second petition for the Church, we might perhaps say that He no longer prays. "I will," He forcibly says, speaking as the Son of God. Thus did He bequeath heaven and eternal blessedness to all the faithful members of His Church, for He is unwilling to be separated from them; His love requires an everlasting union.

Jesus then concludes His prayer, saying:

"Just Father, the world hath not known Thee. But I have known Thee; and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have made known Thy name to them, and will make it known; that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them." [353]

The dominant ideas are here repeated and grouped together: the unbelief of the world, the faith of a large number, Christ's office in the past and future, and, above all, the love of God. The nobility and strength and tenderness of this concluding synthesis fill every Christian soul with joyful confidence.

[352] John 17:20–24.
[353] John 17:25 f.

CHAPTER IV

The Divine Victim

We now enter into the very sanctuary of Christ's Passion. The august Victim is about to offer us a sublime spectacle of gentle resignation and invincible courage, amid the most frightful physical and moral sufferings that can be conceived. We may distinguish four acts in this touching drama. The first act corresponds to the Savior's agony and arrest at Gethsemani; the second, to the ecclesiastical trial before the Sanhedrin; the third, to the civil trial before Pilate; the fourth, to Christ's crucifixion and death. The accounts, though preserving their character of noble simplicity, are especially appealing to the human heart. Each of them, while maintaining the usual likeness to the others, shows us most interesting special details or scenes.

I. The Savior's Agony and Arrest at Gethsemani

The drama opens with an exceedingly sorrowful scene. In fact, only the agony of the cross can be compared with the agony of Gethsemani. The tortures inflicted by men, however excruciating, are of little account beside the moral sufferings directly imposed by God. But it was God who placed upon the Savior's soul, in the garden of Gethsemani, the horrible weight of all the sins of the world.[354]

After His prayer our Lord again started forward and soon

[354] Matt. 26:36–46; Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22:39–46. St. John does not relate this episode.

reached the Cedron valley,[355] very narrow at this point, which extends southwardly along the walls of Jerusalem and, on the other side, along the foot of the Mount of Olives. By one of the bridges which then spanned the valley, He crossed the nearly always dried-up bed of that brook and presently came to the entrance of the region [356] of Gethsemani, situated at the base of the hill,[357] opposite the northernmost part of the Temple esplanade. The Hebrew name of the place means "oil press." [358] It is one of the holiest spots on earth, and has, therefore, always been an object of special veneration for Christians. Its shape is that of an irregular square, about fifty yards on a side. It is surrounded by a high wall. But its dimensions were formerly greater, especially north and south. Upon entering the place to-day, one is impressed by the sight of eight venerable olive trees, which "bear the marks of very great age. They are held up by masonry, and each of them has three or four trunks, separated from one another by a considerable space, because they have grown during the centuries, separating more and more from the primitive trunk. Their bark is rough and deeply grooved, as though covered with the scars and wrinkles of old age. If these olive trees are not the ones that witnessed the Savior's agony,[359] at least they are offshoots of them. . . . These trunks are many

[355] On this "winter torrent," as it is spoken by St. John (18:1) and by Josephus (*Ant.*, VIII, i, 5, χείμαρρος) see Volume I, pp. 118 f.; also Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible*, plates 14, 25, 26.

[356] This word best translates the noun χωρίον, used by St. Matthew and St. Mark (Vulg., *villa* and *praedium*). St. John speaks of a κῆπος or "garden," but in a broad sense.

[357] St. Jerome, *Onomasticon*, under the word *Gethsemani: "Ad radices montis Oliveti."*

[358] *Gathshemani;* the Greek transcription is Γηθσημανεί. St. Jerome, *in Matth.*, 26:36, suggests the translation *vallis pinguissima*, "the very fat valley," according to the softened pronunciation *Gueshemani.*

[359] The doubt is based on the fact that, according to Josephus, *Bell. Iud.*, VI, i, 1, Titus, when besieging Jerusalem in the year 70, cut down all the trees at that side of the city.

centuries old and their appearance is in singular contrast with that of the young branches which still grow from them." [360] The tradition fixing upon this site as the scene of our Lord's agony goes back at least to Constantine, and his testimony has come down through the ages clearly and without a break.[361]

Upon entering the olive grove, the owner of which may have been a disciple, our Lord stopped a moment, and said to His Apostles: "Sit you here, till I go yonder and pray." At the same time He pointed to the part of the garden whither He was going. He took with Him only three of them, Peter, James, and John, the most devoted and beloved,[362] to whom He had several times, but under very different circumstances, granted the privilege of accompanying Him. In the present instance it was not His power and glory they were going to behold close at hand, as when He raised the daughter of Jairus [363] or was transfigured on the mountain,[364] and when He disclosed to them the mysteries of the future; [365] but they were to witness His human weakness and deep humiliation. These Apostles are precious witnesses for us, because to them we owe the details about the agony at Gethsemani. In keeping with the practice which He had recommended,[366] Jesus usually went aside by Himself to pray; [367] but this time He felt the need of having friends nearby—friends on whose sympathy He could rely.

The night must have been well advanced, for the law prescribed not to prolong the Paschal feast beyond midnight, and

[360] Vigouroux, *Le Nouv. Testament et les Découv. Arch.*, 2d ed., p. 170.

[361] Eusebius and St. Jerome, *Onomasticon, l.c.* See *La Palestine* by Professors of Notre-Dame de France, 2d ed., pp. 190–193.

[362] "*Qui videbantur fideliores et fortes,*" says Origen, *Comment. in Matth.*, ser. 71.

[363] Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51.

[364] Matt. 17:1; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:28.

[365] Mark 13:3.

[366] Matt. 6:6.

[367] Matt. 14:23; Mark 1:35; 6:46.

a considerable time had elapsed since the Savior and the Apostles left the Cenacle. Suddenly a flood of bitterness invaded Christ's soul with extreme violence, as if seeking to overwhelm it completely. As the sacred writers attempt to describe it, it was a mixture of sorrow, fright, disgust, and powerlessness.[368] St. Justin, speaking of this sorrow, which reached so great a degree of intensity, says that, under its influence, "everything in Jesus was paralyzed, as Jacob's strength had been under the mysterious hand of the angel." [369] Moreover, Christ Himself revealed to His three confidants, by a really tragic phrase, the frightful anguish which seized upon His whole being: "My soul," He said, "is sorrowful even unto death." An ordinary man would certainly have succumbed to so heavy a burden; but God sustained His Son, reserving Him for still other sufferings. As St. Matthew and St. Mark expressly state, that was only the beginning of the terrible agony. Jesus Himself said: "Stay you here, and watch with Me." The thought that three of His best friends would be watching only a few steps away, is a consolation for His desolate heart.

This prelude of Christ's Passion was one of its most painful moments. Only the agony of the cross can be compared with the agony of Gethsemani. The word "agony" is St. Luke's,[370] and no other word could so exactly express the terrible struggle which took place in the Savior's soul. But, although the victim may for a moment be frightened and tremble, the sovereign priest, which Jesus also was, at once succeeded in calming the victim and inspiring Him with dauntless courage. The succeeding details are proof of this.

[368] Λυπεῖσθαι (St. Matthew), ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι (St. Mark), ἀδημονεῖν (St. Matthew and St. Mark). These three verbs together indicate a moral suffering that has reached the last degree of intensity. The first of these verbs expresses deep grief; the second, an irresistible fright; the third means, to be no longer able.

[369] *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 125; cf. Gen. 32:22–32.

[370] Luke 22:43.

Withdrawing from His three Apostles by a powerful act of His will,[371] notwithstanding the repugnance felt by His human nature in the face of such anguish, He went ahead a short distance beneath the trees—St. Luke says, the distance of a stone's throw, *i. e.*, about a hundred or two hundred feet—the more freely to pour forth His soul before God. Then, in His intense distress, He fell upon His knees,[372] and prostrated Himself with His face on the ground. In this posture of desolation, adoration, and absolute submission, He begged His Father to remove from Him, if possible, this frightful hour, so that it might pass without bringing to Him the sufferings with which it was laden. St. Paul refers to this scene, when He speaks of Christ as, "with a strong cry and tears, offering up prayers and supplications to Him that was able to save Him from death." [373] Jesus said aloud: "My Father, all things are possible to Thee; remove this chalice from me; but not what I will, but what Thou wilt." If we may so speak, there is great art in this prayer, which came from Christ's heart under the blow of an unparalleled pain. He addresses God by a most tender name, "My Father," or, as we read in the Second Gospel, "Abba, Father." [374] Then it reminds God that everything is possible to Him, that He can accomplish His purposes in a thousand ways, that He can therefore remove from the suppliant the cup of bitterness.[375] Finally it closes with an act of complete acquiescence. In a sense, nothing was easier for God than to remove the terrible chalice from the lips of the Son of Man. Yet His decrees regarding the world's reedemption through the merits of the Messias'

[371] The word ἀπεσπάσθη (Vulg., *avulsus est*) supposes a violent effort.

[372] This detail is expressly mentioned by St. Matthew and St. Mark.

[373] Heb. 5:7.

[374] The Aramaic word *abba* has the meaning of "father." This prayer of the Savior is recorded by the three Synoptics with slight variants; but in every case it is made up of the same elements.

[375] This Oriental metaphor is easily understood. We have already seen it, Matt. 20:22 f. and Mark 10:38 f.; cf. Ps. 10:7; 74:8 f., etc.

Passion and death were determined from all eternity; it was because Jesus knew them so well that He was so gravely troubled. And that same knowledge helped Him to such courageous resignation. Whatever happens, His confidence in His Father will not be disturbed, even though, as He expects, He has to empty the chalice to the dregs.

Although it is true that the world never beheld such anguish, it is also true that it never heard a more touchingly beautiful prayer. That conditional wish to escape from inconceivable suffering, that groaning of nature under such circumstances, was quite legitimate; but what dominated all else in Christ's soul was His unreserved self-abandonment to God's good pleasure. In a truly filial manner, He set forth his petition. Then He remained silent; or, if He prolonged His prayer, it was to repeat the heroic *Fiat,* which is like an echo from one of the petitions of the Lord's Prayer.[376] As our readers know, Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemani, aside from its salutary example for Christians of all times in their hours of trial, has a very great dogmatic importance, because it clearly shows in Jesus two distinct natures, the divine and the human, and also two distinct wills: the human will, to which so great sufferings were repugnant, and the divine will, which is that of His Father.[377] The antagonism which we have just seen between these two wills is, indeed, mysterious; but it is readily understood, as soon as we admit the Incarnation of the Word with all its consequences.

With all due respect we now ask what it was that Jesus beheld, so bitter and desolating, in the chalice, that He felt so intense a fright, so strong a repugnance. First of all He saw therein His Passion and death, with their horrible details. As St. Thomas Aquinas, the prince of theologians, says,[378]

[376] Matt. 6: 10.
[377] See Petavius, *De Incarnatione,* IX, vi, 4.
[378] *Summa Theolog.,* p. 3, q. 46, art. 6, ad 4.

death, especially the death which Christ knew to be in store for Him, filled Him with a legitimate aversion. It was also a consequence of the Incarnation. "The soul naturally wishes to remain united to the body, and this desire existed in the soul of Christ. . . . The separation was, therefore, opposed to the natural desire: hence that separation saddened Him." But this was not the sole nor even the principal cause of Christ's agony at Gethsemani; the contrary supposition would be an outrage against His heart, which was so capable of every act of heroism. And St. Thomas says further: "Although Christ was thus afflicted, this was not only because He was going to lose His life; it was also on account of the sins of all men." This was the veritable reason of His terrible agony. It was the enormous weight of our sins that overwhelmed Him and made Him implore the divine justice for mercy. Rightly, then, does Bossuet say: "O Jesus, whom I may no longer call innocent, since I see Thee loaded with more crimes than the greatest malefactors, Thou art to be treated according to Thy deserts. In the garden of Olives, Thy Father abandons Thee to Thyself. . . . Lower Thy head, Thou hast willed to be a surety, Thou hast taken our iniquities upon Thee, Thou shalt bear all their weight; Thou shalt pay the full debt, without appeal, without mercy." [379] The prophet Isaias says: "He was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins . . . and by his bruises we are healed. . . . Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." [380]

But thus far we have witnessed only the first phase of Christ's agony. Still under the weight of His terror, He comes to the three privileged Apostles, seeking for comfort in their friendship. Alas, that mark of sympathy also failed Him, for they were asleep.

Turning first to Peter, whose protestations had been the

[379] First sermon for Good Friday.
[380] Is. 53: 4–6.

most earnest at the time when the sad abandonment by all the Apostles was foretold, He said to him: "Simon, sleepest thou?" This mild complaint then became general: "Could you not watch one hour with Me?" In the Cenacle they had declared themselves ready to sacrifice their lives for their Master. What had become of their courage? But, as St. Luke, the physician, remarks, this sleep was not that of indifference; besides the advanced hour of the night, there was a physiological cause for it, namely sorrow. This latter, in many cases, produces a tension which soon overwhelms the senses and casts one into a deep sleep.[381] It was in spite of themselves that the three disciples fell asleep. As on a former occasion, on the mount of the Transfiguration,[382] they were the victims of an extraordinary sleep; and therefore, says St. Mark, "they knew not what to answer Him," as happens to persons who are suddenly awakened. These faithful friends had made a serious effort to stay awake, as the Savior had asked them to do.

Jesus followed His loving rebuke by an important admonition: "Watch ye and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." For Peter, James, and John, as also for the other Apostles, the most proximate moral danger was that of abandoning or denying their Master. Hence they would need to employ the two great safeguards indicated by faith: a watchfulness that gives warning of the enemy's presence, and prayer which powerfully helps to overcome the assault. Their spirit was, no doubt, generous and zealous; this they had shown by their enthusiastic promises. But, while the spirit—here meaning the loftier part of the soul—has noble aspirations and impulses which elevate

[381] *"Tandem gravatum animi anxietate corpus altior somnus oppressit."* Quintus Curtius, IV, xiii, 17. Cf. Apuleius, II. St. Matthew and St. Mark express this torpor by two strong participles: βεβαρημένοι and καταβαρυνομένοι (Vulg., *gravati*). The Apostles' eyes were heavy, weighed down by drowsiness.

[382] Mark 9:1; Luke 9:32.

a man, mortal and animal flesh easily drags him down.[383]

Earthly consolations, even the most lawful, were lacking Him, and Jesus again withdrew to seek comfort in prayer. Still plunged in deep anguish, He said: "My Father, if this chalice may not pass away, but I must drink it, Thy will be done." This time the word "Father" is accompanied by the possessive pronoun.[384] St. Jerome remarks that this is a sort of filial caress (*dixit blandiens*) which Jesus gives His Father, in order the more easily to have His prayer heard. That prayer was expressed almost in the same terms as before; but it stressed especially perfect resignation to the divine will. The direct request has disappeared; it now appears veiled under an expression of complete assent. For Jesus the continuation of His interior suffering is a clear indication that to spare Him is not part of His Father's plan. He therefore prepares Himself for an absolute obedience. Such was the second phase of Christ's agony.

After withstanding this further assault for some time, He returned to the three disciples, but again found them asleep. Without waking them, He returned to His solitude and repeated His prayer in its second form, which, as His heart told Him, better expressed the closest conformity with the divine will. So long as this struggle lasted, He thus kept Himself closely united to God, letting His human nature groan, but triumphing over it by His heroic submission. This is what St. Luke forcibly expresses when he says: "Being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly." [385] To the repeated assaults of human repugnance He opposed more and more sublime flights of prayer and resignation.

[383] This contrast is frequently described by St. Paul.

[384] Πάτερ μου (Vulg., *Pater mi*). This is the only instance of this expression in the Gospels.

[385] The word ἐκτενέστερον indicates rather the intensity of the prayer than its length (Vulg., *prolixius*).

St. Luke [386] mentions two extraordinary incidents, one in the supernatural, the other in the purely natural order, which seem to have ended the agony at Gethsemani.[387] "There appeared to Him," says the Evangelist, "an angel from heaven, strengthening Him. And His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground." These two are among the most precious details peculiar to the Third Gospel.[388] They show to what extent the Savior's anguish had penetrated His soul, and what extreme violence He had to use against nature, so that He might fully accept the will of His heavenly Father.

The appearance of the angel was an external phenomenon, which the three Apostles nearest our Lord could themselves observe. The Greek expression used by the Evangelist [389] can be understood only of an objective sight. The angels had, in a way, introduced Christ on this earth by announcing His birth to the shepherds; they had assisted Him after His temptation; a few days later they were to be the witnesses of His Resurrection and Ascension. It is but natural, therefore, that we should find one of them near Him at the hour of His terrible agony, sent by God Himself to comfort and encourage Him. But what an indication of the unutterable anguish of His suffering, which would have been unbearable for His human nature left to its own strength!

The second detail will surprise us less if we bear in mind that St. Luke was a physician. It is very impressive. Under

[386] Luke 22:43 f.

[387] The question of their correct place in the order of events is disputed. Some commentators connect them with the first phase of the struggle. Along with other interpreters, we think they belong more fittingly to the third and last phase: the bloody sweat, as an extreme indication of the violence of the combat; the coming of the angel, to assist Christ to complete His victory. They were placed in this order by Tatian in his *Diatessaron*. St. Luke is of no help to us in the solution of this minor chronological problem, because he condenses the whole story of the agony into a single assault.

[388] As to the doubts raised concerning their authenticity, and as to other Rationalist objections, see *infra*, Appendix XI.

[389] Ὤφθη, "was seen."

the profound influence of terror, anxiety, or strife, the pulsations of our Lord's sacred heart became so rapid and violent, and the blood circulation was so much accelerated that a bloody sweat was produced, which covered the Savior's whole body, and trickled to the ground in large drops.[390] The Apostles could see the marks of it on His face when they rejoined Him. It was possible for others also to perceive its traces at the spot where He had been kneeling. Numerous instances, observed from the earliest times, prove the possibility of a bloody sweat under conditions such as those in which our Lord then was.[391]

From the foregoing details we can see that Christ's agony, like His temptation in the wilderness, was made up of three successive assaults and a threefold victory. After His triumph over the last assault, He regained complete calm and, if we may so speak, recovered full self-control. He then returned to His disciples. Strong enough now to do without human succor, He said to them: "Sleep ye now and take your rest. Behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners." In these words some interpreters see traces of irony. Behold I am about to be arrested; sleep, if you have the courage to do so: this would be the meaning. But irony seems little suited to the Savior at this moment. There is nothing to show that He departed from the spirit of gentleness which had animated all His words and acts on that memorable night. We therefore prefer, with most commentators, following Origen, St. Hilary, and St. Augustine, to give the expression its natural meaning and to suppose Christ urged the three disciples that they take advantage of the short respite granted them to take a little rest. Under the

[390] According to the correct reading of the Greek text, the participle καταβαίνοντες refers to the drops of blood. The Vulgate (*decurrentis*) follows the reading as if the participle modified the word "blood."

[391] Cf. Fillion, *Essais d'Exégèse*, pp. 123–126; Loenartz, *De Sudore Sanguinis;* Stroud, *Physical Causes of Christ's Death*, pp. 115–120, etc. See also *infra*, Appendix XI.

loving watchfulness of their Master, they again went to sleep. After an interval of time, upon hearing the steps of the mob that was coming to arrest Him, He awoke them, saying: "Arise up, let us go. Behold, he that will betray Me is at hand, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners." Jesus had completely recovered His serenity and courage, and advanced to meet His executioners—"sinners," as He characteristically calls them.

"As He was yet speaking," say all three Synoptics, Judas, "one of the Twelve," came up, followed by a large crowd which he was leading, and which came from the Sanhedrin, to arrest Jesus. This dramatic scene is related with numerous details by all four Evangelists.[392]

After leaving the Cenacle, the traitor had not remained idle. He went to the chief priests and informed them that the present moment was favorable for the execution of their contract. He agreed to deliver up his Master at once, without causing any tumult. They immediately furnished him an escort, with which he entered the enclosure of Gethsemani. This escort was made up of servants of the Sanhedrin and Temple police, the former provided with the short swords then much in use,[393] the latter with ordinary clubs. Some police captains accompanied their men, and several members of the Sanhedrin joined them so as to be present at the arrest. St. John mentions a number of Roman soldiers, whom the chief priests had obtained from the governor, alleging that they would be useful in facilitating a simple police undertaking which might meet with some resistance. These soldiers were detached from the garrison habitually quartered in the large Antonia tower, which stood at the northwest corner of the Temple. A tribune was in charge of them.[394] Some of the police or soldiers car-

[392] Matt. 26:47–56; Mark 14:43–52; Luke 22:47–53; John 18:2–11.

[393] The μαχαίρα of the Greeks.

[394] St. John speaks of a cohort (σπείρα), which ordinarily would consist of

ried lanterns and torches to search the olive grove, if need be, for the Paschal moon—supposing it were shining that night—would but feebly light up the wooded parts of the garden.

St. John tells us the reason why Judas came directly and confidently with his band to seek Christ at Gethsemani. Either during His previous visits to Jerusalem or on these recent evenings, the Master had often gone there to spend the night with His disciples, when He did not go to Bethania. The traitor had foreseen this and laid his plan accordingly. Most of those who formed the escort did not know our Lord by sight: therefore a prearranged signal was necessary, especially at night, to point Him out to those who were charged with arresting Him. Therefore Judas, not foreseeing that the Savior would present Himself of His own accord, had said to the people with him: "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is He; lay hold on Him, and lead Him away carefully." This last detail we owe to St. Mark. Judas, knowing from experience the power of Jesus, and also fearing some resistance on the part of the Apostles, appealed to his band to exercise great caution and energy. Although among the Jews kissing was the ordinary manner of salutation by disciples to their masters,[395] in the present case the choice of such a sign reveals to what infamy the apostate Judas had fallen. It required a vile soul like his to transform this mark of friendship and love into a signal of betrayal and perfidy.

As soon as Judas perceived the Savior at the entrance of the enclosure, he came forward at the head of his band, walked directly to the Master, and kissed His face with affectation,[396] saying: "Hail, Rabbi." Jesus allowed him to do so, but He showed Judas that He was not a dupe of his hypocrisy, say-

five or six hundred men. But it is likely that in the present case only a more or less considerable detachment is meant. A too great display of force would have drawn too much attention and would have defeated the purpose intended.

[395] Wünsche, *Neue Beiträge,* p. 339.

[396] This is indicated by the compound verb "he kissed again and again."

ing: "Friend,[397] whereto art thou come? Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" To this solemn appeal to his conscience Judas could make no reply.

Then took place a dramatic scene, which St. John alone records. It displays the Savior's invincible courage and the freedom with which He surrendered Himself to His enemies. It is not they who arrest Him; it is He who makes Himself their prisoner. Taking a few steps towards them, He asked: "Whom seek ye?" They answer, using His popular name: "Jesus of Nazareth." With majestic calm He replied: "I am He." St. John, by one of those striking contrasts in which he excels, shows us, beside the Savior's mild and noble features, the traitor's Satanic mask: "And Judas also, who betrayed Him, stood with them."

Our Lord had scarcely pronounced the simple words "It is I," when the servants, policemen, and soldiers who were nearest to Him, stepped back and fell to the ground. It is hard to doubt that this was the effect of a real miracle, similar to that by which, on a former occasion, Jesus escaped from the murderous hands of the people of Nazareth.[398] Ancient interpreters[399] have never hesitated to recognize this miracle, which belongs to the category of the moral victories won by Christ over rebellious wills.[400] Jesus, therefore, allowed Himself to be bound and to be led away by the servants of the Sanhedrin; but He showed them that, had He so willed, they would have been powerless against Him.[401] Moreover, the

[397] It is to be noted that the Greek noun corresponding to this word is not φίλε, the real term for friendship, but ἑταῖρε, which has rather the sense of "comrade."

[398] Luke 4:30.

[399] *E.g.*, St. John Chrysostom, *Homil. in Joan.*, 83; St. Leo, *Sermo de Passione*, 2; St. Augustine, *Tractat. in Ioan.*, 112. Cf. Langen, *Die letzten Lebenstage Jesu*, p. 220.

[400] Fillion, *Les Miracles de N.-S. Jésus-Christ*, II, 330–337. Several Rationalist authors (even Strauss) acknowledge that the Evangelist intended to relate a miraculous event.

[401] J. Belser, *Geschichte des Leidens und Sterbens . . . des Herrn*, p. 262.

Gospel account does not oblige us to apply to the entire band accompanying Judas, the words, "They went backward, and fell to the ground." Those who fell were the ones whom our Lord had questioned and who had answered Him; they were not necessarily the whole band, which on the way had been joined by curious and fanatical persons, and must have been rather numerous.[402]

When they who had fallen to the ground stood up, the Savior repeated His question: "Whom seek ye?" Again, but this time less arrogantly than before, since they had scarcely recovered from their first fright, they said: "Jesus of Nazareth." Our Lord replied: "I have told you that I am He. If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way." At these words He pointed to His Apostles, timidly grouped a little distance away. Even in the act of surrendering Himself, the Good Shepherd protected His dearest disciples, "that the word might be fulfilled which He said" two or three hours before, in His prayer to His heavenly Father: "Of them whom Thou hast given Me, I have not lost any one." [403]

The police and soldiers then seized and brutally bound Him. But it was not to be said that Christ was so mistreated without a single one of His followers taking up His defense. "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" said the Apostles, who recalled the Master's recent admonitions about the need of providing themselves with swords. Interpreting the Savior's words literally, they thought the hour had come to use their weapons. Without waiting for His reply, Simon Peter,[404] in his ready and fiery zeal, drew one of the two swords which

[402] Knabenbauer, *Commentar. in Evang. S. Joannis,* p. 523.

[403] John 17: 12.

[404] None of the Synoptics mentions his name in this connection, probably because it might have caused some difficulty or even danger for the Apostle to designate him by name. There was no longer any unfittingness or difficulty when St. John wrote his Gospel, and hence he included this interesting detail in his account.

had been referred to in the Cenacle,[405] and which he had concealed beneath his cloak, and with it struck one of the aggressors, who perhaps was taking an especially odious part in this scene of violence. But the stroke was badly aimed and, instead of cutting into the head, merely injured the right ear. This last detail we have from St. Luke, the physician.[406] The wounded man, Malchus by name, was one of the servants of the High Priest Caiphas. "That is enough," [407] Jesus at once said to His disciples, to prevent their continuing this unequal and dangerous struggle. He then touched the wounded ear, which probably had not been completely cut off, and healed it. This was His last recorded miracle. It is the only one of the kind attributed to Him in the Gospels.

This intervention by the chief of the Apostles, showed courage and devotion; but it was utterly futile. It even increased the danger for the Master and the disciples, because it might draw the worst reprisals upon them. This our Lord gives the too eager Apostle to understand, in a few words amplifying and explaining His order, "That is enough." He said to Peter: "Put up again thy sword into its place. For all that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot ask My Father, and He will give Me presently more than twelve legions of angels? [408] How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that so it must be done? The chalice which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?"

Christ knew that the hour had finally come to drink the chalice of bitterness, and He was ready to drain it to the last drop. No longer does He ask, even conditionally, that it be

[405] Luke 22: 38.

[406] Luke 22: 50.

[407] The Greek equivalent of this sentence, ἐᾶτε ἕως τούτου (Vulg., *sinite usque huc*), is somewhat obscure, and has been variously interpreted (see the commentaries). The translation which we have adopted seems the most natural.

[408] The Roman legion usually contained 6,000 soldiers; but its full complement might reach 10,000.

removed from His lips, so perfectly is His human will in harmony with His Father's. In not calling upon God and the angels to help Him, He avoids belying the divine prophecies, which had so clearly announced that the Messias would suffer and die for the salvation of the world. Furthermore, He needed not the help of angels. Had He so wished, He was Himself powerful enough to escape from His persecutors.

After thus addressing His Apostles, the Savior turned to those who had unjustly arrested Him, especially those who were responsible for the outrage, the chief priests and the officers of the Temple police. With noble gravity He protested against the hateful and unjust methods they had used against Him. Looking them straight in the face, He said: "You are come out as it were to a robber with swords and clubs to apprehend Me. I sat daily with you teaching in the Temple, and you laid not hands on Me." This rebuke was most just. The large number of the aggressors, their weapons, the solitary place, the hour of the night—all seemed to indicate that they were looking for a dangerous robber. Yet Jesus had never sought to elude their pursuit, as He tells them, contrasting His frank and open conduct with their perfidious maneuvers. Again He speaks of the need of fulfilling the divine prophecies: "All this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." This was the fourth time He repeated this important thought that night, so much did it fill His mind and heart.[409] He further denounced the conduct of His enemies, saying: "But this is your hour and the power of darkness." These figurative words mean: Your hour is that of Satan, the prince of darkness, whose worthy accomplices you have become.

Then it was that another of the Savior's prophecies[410] was fulfilled. The Apostles, seeing that their Master rejected

[409] Cf. Matt. 26:24, 31, 54, 56.
[410] Matt. 26:31; Mark 14:27.

any idea of human resistance, and even declined to appeal to the help of Heaven, were seized with panic, because they feared for their own liberty, perhaps even for their life. Without exception [411] they all fled, even Peter, even James and John. The Shepherd was struck, and the sheep were scattered.

At this point St. Mark relates a little incident that is characteristic and partly mysterious, proving how dangerous it then was to be regarded as one of Christ's followers and what violence might be used by those men who arrested Him.[412] While they were bringing their prisoner to the High Priest's house, a young man, attracted by the noise, began following the procession. Was he acting out of sympathy or merely from curiosity? Having been suddenly awakened, he came out of his house with only a cloth or sheet wrapped about him.[413] As soon as they saw him, the Sanhedrin's agents and the Roman soldiers tried to seize him; but he freed himself from their hold and escaped, leaving the cloth in their hands. Many commentators have vainly sought to determine who this young man was. Among the names that have been proposed are Lazarus of Bethania, the beloved disciple,[414] his brother James,[415] and even Saul, the future St. Paul. Several modern commentators identify him with the Evangelist St. Mark. What is certain is that, if he had been a resident of Jerusalem, he would not have gone through the streets clothed

[411] St. Mark lays stress upon this sorrowful detail by placing the word *πάντες*, "all," at the end of the sentence. The apocryphal Gospel of Peter (7:26 f.) tries to palliate their fault by making it appear that they simply hid themselves for a while. They excuse themselves, saying: "[The Jews] sought us as evildoers, on the pretext that we purposed setting fire to the Temple. . . . We fasted and were weeping and sad day and night until the Sabbath."

[412] Mark 14:51 f.

[413] St. Mark uses the word *σινδών*. It meant a large piece of cotton or linen. In the present text it signifies a sort of sheet.

[414] St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Ps.*, 13; St. Ambrose, *Ennarat. in Ps.*, 36; St. Gregory the Great, *Moral.*, XIV, 14.

[415] St. Epiphanius, *Haer.*, LXXXVII, 13.

merely in a sheet. Evidently he lived near Gethsemani and may have been prompted only by curiosity.

II. Christ's Trial Before the Sanhedrin; Peter's Threefold Denial

All the Evangelists attach great importance to the Savior's trial, and describe its shifting scenes dramatically but calmly: first, in its religious phase before the Jewish Sanhedrin, presided over by Caiphas; then at the pretorium, before Pilate, the Roman procurator. This double trial clearly emphasizes the two elements of the Savior's Messiaship—the Jewish tribunal condemning Him as Son of God, the Roman tribunal as King of the Jews. The religious trial was made up of three different sessions of unequal interest. The first was held at the house of Annas, the second at the house of the High Priest Caiphas, both of these at night; the third again at Caiphas' house, the next morning. This part of the trial was conducted with revolting haste and unfairness.[416]

Let us return to Gethsemani and accompany the divine Prisoner to the place where He will undergo a semblance of trial. After so many upheavals in the Jewish capital during the last eighteen centuries, it is difficult to reconstruct with exactness what is called "the way of the captivity," that is, the

[416] Many have undertaken to review this trial, from the standpoint either of general jurisprudence, or of Jewish law in particular. That the condemnation was just and legal in its motives and its form, has been the audacious claim of several Jewish writers, as, for example, Salvador, *Histoire des Institutions de Moise et du Peuple Hébreu*, 3d ed., I, 383–393; Saalschütz, *Mosaisches Recht*, II, 623–626; F. Cohen, *Les Déicides*, 2d. ed., pp. 123–138. But the historian Jost (*Geschichte des Judenthums*, I, 402–409), a former rabbi who became a Christian (Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 532–535), and other Jewish writers justly brand Caiphas and his fellow judges as murderers. With regard to general jurisprudence or the question of Jewish law, see Dupin, *Jésus devant Caïphe et Pilate* (a somewhat superficial work); Lémann, *Valeur de l'Assemblée qui Prononça la Peine de Mort contre Jésus-Christ;* Inners, *The Trial of Jesus Christ, a Legal Monograph;* Rosadi, *Il Processo di Gesù*, 4th ed.; Lord Shaw of Dunferline, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, London, 1929.

route by which Christ was taken after His arrest, first to the High Priest's palace and then to the pretorium. But the general direction of that route is known. According to a tradition going back at least to the year 333, the pontifical palace was located on Mount Sion, very near the Cenacle. The Savior, roughly pushed and dragged by the Temple police, must therefore have retraced almost the same route as He had followed a few hours earlier with His Apostles. Thus He again crossed the Cedron and mounted the eastern slope of Mount Sion.[417] This quarter, which at that time was the most notable and splendid part of the city, is now largely abandoned, surrounded by fields, gardens, and crumbling walls.[418]

A detail peculiar to the Fourth Gospel[419] informs us that our Lord was first brought, not to Caiphas' palace, as we might be led to suppose from the narrative of the Synoptics, but to that of Annas, the former High Priest, whose daughter was married to Caiphas, the actual pontiff. Annas, although deposed in the year 15 by the Roman governor of the time, still exercised a considerable influence over all classes of Jewish society. His Hebrew name was Hanan, which the Evangelists give in the Greek form of Annas, and which Josephus calls Ananus. The Jewish high priests were generally unpopular, even in the bosom of their nation, because of their arrogance. Besides this fault, Annas was avaricious, and his whole family was therefore disliked; it was partly owing to him that the price of animals sold for the sacrifices had risen to an unheard-of height. This fact, however, is of little moment in the present matter. Annas, an astute and intriguing old man, succeeded in having the high priesthood inherited

[417] Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible,* plates 14 and 15; de Piellat, *Voie de la Captivité et Chemin de la Croix à Jérusalem,* 3d ed.

[418] Sanday, *Sacred Sites of the Gospels,* p. 80.

[419] John 18: 12–14.

after him, though at short and irregular intervals, by five of his sons, one of his grandsons, and his son-in-law Caiphas, so that the "house of Annas" could be spoken of as a sort of dynasty.[420] He was able to inspire the steps to be taken in the trial of Jesus. For this reason, and also on account of a natural deference on the part of his son-in-law, his advice was sought before Jesus was brought before the Sanhedrin. Moreover, special circumstances favored this interview, if, as generally supposed, Annas' residence was in Caiphas' house or in an adjoining palace.[421]

Do we know anything about this preliminary hearing, which was altogether unofficial? The question has always been a matter of discussion, and it is impossible to solve it in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. At first glance it would seem that the interrogation described by St. John must have taken place at Annas's house, since it is related immediately after the account of the Savior being brought to the house of the former High Priest, and since the Evangelist concludes it by saying that "Annas sent Him [Jesus] bound to Caiphas the High Priest." [422] But, on the other hand, if the scene we are about to describe took place before Annas, we would have to say that St. John remains altogether silent about Christ appearing before Caiphas, although it was the chief appearance; yet this hardly seems admissible. Furthermore, the title of "pontiff," given to him who conducted this inquiry, can designate only Caiphas, as the Evangelist himself recalls at this very point.[423] Along with many ancient and modern interpreters,[424] we therefore hold that St. John merely refers to Christ's being brought before the former High Priest, and

[420] Schürer, *Geschichte des jüd. Volkes,* 3d ed., II, 217.

[421] See Vigouroux, *Le Nouveau Testament et les Découvertes Archéologiques,* 2d ed., p. 174.

[422] John 18:24.

[423] John 18:13 f. Cf. 11:49, 51, and 18:24.

[424] For additional details, see the commentaries; also Langen, *Die letzten*

gives no details about the hearing, which, being merely private and unofficial, could not lead to any result. It was simply a preliminary inquiry.

At its close, the Temple guards and the servants of the Sanhedrin, upon orders from the former High Priest, brought Jesus to the house of Caiphas. There is no longer any question of the Roman soldiers, whose help was desired only for the arrest, which was supposed might be more or less difficult. Those soldiers must have returned to their barracks after leaving Gethsemani, or, at the latest, after accompanying the prisoner as far as Annas's house.

This is the third time we have met Caiphas in the course of the Gospel story. His name was mentioned at the outset by St. Luke,[425] who used it to date the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry. St. John mentions it when he tells of the infamous advice given by Caiphas to the members of the Sanhedrin with regard to Jesus.[426] The Evangelist here recalls that advice so as to point out in advance that justice could not be expected from a tribunal whose leader had cynically uttered such a view. "Caiphas" (in Aramaic "Kayyafa," in Greek "Kaiphas") was only a surname of the then ruling High Priest. His real name was Joseph. He was set up by the proconsul Valerius Gratus in the year 18 and held the office of supreme pontiff until the year 36.[427] To have been kept in office by the Romans for such a long time, especially under a governor of Pilate's character, whereas most of the other pontificates had only an ephemeral duration, he must have become, with a base compliance and shameful docility, the

Lebenstage Jesu, pp. 234–238; Zahn (*Das Evangelium des Johannes,* p. 613) takes a view intermediate between these two, namely, that the session spoken of by St. John, was held in Annas's lodgings, but that Caiphas presided over it and directed its deliberations.

[425] Luke 3:2; see Volume II, page 26.

[426] John 11:49.

[427] Josephus, *Ant.,* XVIII, ii, 2; iv, 3.

agent of their policy and must have put himself at the service of their interests, at the expense of his country's welfare. From the Christian standpoint, his great notoriety comes from the hateful and criminal part he took in Christ's condemnation. For this reason his name has ever been held in dishonor.

When the Savior was brought to Caiphas' house, the members of the Sanhedrin, who had been hastily convoked although it was still night, were not yet assembled. While awaiting their arrival, the High Priest subjected Jesus to a preliminary interrogation, the details of which are recorded by St. John.[428] The questions which he put to the Prisoner, in the hope of wringing from Him some compromising avowal, concern two principal points: Who were His disciples, and what was His teaching? Both questions were quite natural. They prove that the High Priest was well acquainted with the Savior's habitual manner of life, since he knew that He was ordinarily accompanied by a number of disciples and that He devoted Himself to preaching. Christ ignored the first question and answered the second with firmness and ability, saying: "I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple, whither all the Jews resort. And in secret I have spoken nothing. Why askest thou Me? Ask them who have heard what I have spoken unto them; behold they know what things I have said."

This is the tone properly befitting a superiority that is conscious of itself, the tone of an accused person who is confident of his innocence, in the presence of an unfair judge who is without love of justice and truth. From two points of view Jesus strikingly emphasizes the public and universal character of His teaching. The Jewish doctors of the time nearly always were satisfied with instructing merely a few disciples. Christ, on the contrary, had taught His doctrine to large

[428] John 18: 19–23.

audiences, made up of all who wished to hear Him. His instructions were intended for the whole world. The places where He preached were the most public in the entire country: the synagogues and the Temple courts that were open to all Jews. He had also preached in the open air on the shores of Lake Genesareth and on the hillsides. And He had commanded His disciples to preach from the housetops. No teacher before Him had so greatly sought publicity. Caiphas needed only to make inquiry; trustworthy witnesses were available in thousands. Jesus dreaded none of them, even though many of them were His avowed enemies.

Our Lord's argument was so sound that the High Priest had nothing to reply. But one of the Sanhedrin's servants, who was then standing near Jesus, dared to strike Him in the face, saying: "Answerest Thou the High Priest so?" Thus did this low courtier, this wretch, arrogate to himself the right to use violence toward our Lord, as though His dignified and worthy reply had been insulting to the High Priest. As Caiphas did not protest against the blameworthy interference of his subordinate, Jesus did so by stating an undeniable dilemma: "If I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil; but if well, why strikest thou Me?" [429]

Shortly afterwards the members of the Sanhedrin arrived in large numbers, and the regular meeting began. St. Matthew and St. Mark describe its chief details.[430] Then was fulfilled the first part of a prophecy that Jesus had recently made: "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and to the Scribes and ancients." [431] The meeting was held in a hall on the second floor of Caiphas' palace.[432] When the Sanhedrin held a

[429] A similar incident in the life of St. Paul is recounted in Acts 23:2.

[430] Matt. 26:59–66; Mark 14:55–64.

[431] Mark 10:33.

[432] This seems evident from what St. Mark says, 14:66, namely, that "Peter was in the court below."

judiciary meeting in its customary place (the *gazzil*), each member had his allotted place. The judges were seated on cushions in a semicircle. In the center, on a platform, were the president (Caiphas in the present case) and the vice-president. Near them were the "sages," who were the ordinary advisers of the high assembly. At each end of the semicircle was a secretary: the one at the right had the duty of gathering whatever was in favor of the accused; the one at the left had to note down whatever was against the accused. In the middle of the room was the accused, surrounded by guards.[433] Probably this same arrangement was followed at Caiphas' house.

Although every idea of justice had been eliminated beforehand, and although the accused had been condemned in advance, it was at least necessary to save appearances and to prepare a legal justification for the death sentence; otherwise what pretext could be offered Pilate to obtain from him the execution of the sentence? And would there not be risk of alienating a considerable number of people with whom Jesus was still popular? Hence there was need first to proceed to the hearing of witnesses. Caiphas and his accomplices had thought of that and were not taken unawares, for several false witnesses, suborned by them,[434] were on hand in the audience chamber. This detail is significant. In fact, what genuine accusation could be made against the Savior, who was innocence itself? Had He not refuted all the preceding attacks of His enemies and covered His foes with confusion? But they wished at any price to gratify their bloodthirsty rage. And so they took the necessary measures to this end.

These lying witnesses were asked to testify. But the per-

[433] Selden, *De Synedrio*, pp. 663 ff.; Lémann, *Valeur de l'Assemblée . . .*, pp. 6–10; Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 71, fig. 15.

[434] St. Matthew (26:59) says: "The chief priests and the whole council sought false witness against Jesus, that they might put Him to death."

fidious hope of those conscienceless judges was promptly frustrated, since, notwithstanding their precautions and their hatred, none of the accusations against Christ was deemed by them sufficient to justify a death sentence. As the Evangelists remark, the testimonies were not in agreement. Now, according to the Mosaic Law, "a testimony was worthless if those giving it did not agree on all points." [435] Providence permitted this disagreement. It was not to be said that a death sentence had been passed upon Jesus under any semblance of guilt. On the contrary, during and after this double trial, except only the murderous Sanhedrin, all those who expressed a view about Jesus—Pilate, Herod, the good thief, Judas the traitor, the Roman centurion in charge of the crucifixion—loudly proclaimed His innocence. It was as Messias, as Redeemer of the Jewish people and of all mankind, that He underwent final execution. He died under the cruelest circumstances, because He was faithful to His mission to the very end.

However, after a long series of false accusations, there came two other witnesses, the minimum number required by the law,[436] who made the following deposition: "We heard Him say: I will destroy this Temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another not made with hands." [437] The charge was in itself a serious one, for the Jews were most jealous of the honor of their Temple, which tormed the glorious center of their religion. The testimony had special force, since both witnesses declared they had personally heard these subversive words. Had not the holy prophet Jeremias been on the point of being put to death because he predicted the destruction of the Temple? [438]

[435] *Sanhedr.*, V, 2. Cf. Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15.

[436] Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15.

[437] Mark 14:58. In St. Matthew's Gospel (26:61) we read: "I am able to destroy the Temple of God, and after three days to rebuild it."

[438] Jer. 26:6–19.

The words that formed the basis of this calumny had been spoken three years before, at the beginning of Christ's ministry. Thanks to St. John, who records them,[439] we are able to control the lying declaration of the two accusers. Our Lord did not say "I will destroy this temple . . . ," but "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." This is quite a different statement. His language was simply hypothetical and contained no disrespect for God's house. By ill-will or misunderstanding, His words, when quoted, were distorted; moreover they did not concern the Temple at Jerusalem, but the sacred body of the Savior, who would rise again three days after His death. Yet these words of Christ had produced a lively impression, for one of the chief complaints with which St. Stephen is a little later reproached, is that he quoted these words as if they really foretold the destruction of the Temple.[440] At this point St. Mark adds that the saying was of no avail in the trial, because the two witnesses who offered them in evidence were not in accord with each other. In conformity with the juridical practice, they had been brought separately before the tribunal, and the second witness must have contradicted the first on some important point, so that the accusation fell flat. And the judges and their chief were disappointed and embarrassed.

Nevertheless, as it was not possible to condemn Jesus without any proof of guilt, and as this special accusation offered an appearance of legality, Caiphas made every effort to profit by it. Rising from his place and advancing to the middle of the assembly,[441] he pretended a deep indignation over the insult offered to the Temple of God and urged the accused prisoner to justify Himself on this point, if He could. In a tone of anger he asked Christ: "Answerest Thou nothing to

[439] John 2:19; see Volume II, page 93.
[440] Acts 6:13 f.
[441] Matt. 26:62; Mark 14:60.

the things which these witness against Thee?" Coming from the presiding officer of a supreme court, this sort of intimidation constituted a flagrant irregularity. With a single word Jesus could have reduced his accusers' calumnies to nothingness. But He preferred to maintain a majestic silence, which St. Mark thus expressively describes: "He held His peace, and answered nothing." Why should He try to exonerate Himself before such judges, since the duly noted disagreement of the witnesses nullified their accusation? Furthermore, He knew they were determined to condemn Him, notwithstanding this fact. On a later occasion St. Peter beautifully praises this eloquent silence, which he compares with a prophecy of Isaias: "Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow His steps. . . . Who, when He was reviled, did not revile; when He suffered, He threatened not." [442]

As the pontiff's question was rendered vain by Christ's silence, Caiphas, wounded in his pride, asked Him, with affected solemnity: "I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us if Thou be the Christ, the Son of the blessed God." [443] Clearly the High Priest knew that Jesus claimed the title of Messias. He could hardly have been ignorant of the fact, especially after our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and after the discussions He had held in the Temple courts with the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the members of the Sanhedrin.

But exactly what meaning did Caiphas give to the words "Son of God"? Did he consider them as a mere synonym of the word "Christ," as indicating the intimate relations of the Messias with God, or did he use them in their strict sense, to designate a divine generation and divine nature? It is im-

[442] 1 Pet. 2:21–23; cf. Is. 53:7; Acts 8:32–34.

[443] The word "blessed" was often associated with the divine name by way of respect.

possible to reply with certainty, because the divinity of the Messias was not commonly held in the Jewish world of that time. Yet, although that great personage appears only with the dignity of "Son of David" in the Psalms of Solomon, He is called "Son of God" by the author of the Book of Henoch and by the author of the Fourth Book of Esdras.[444] Caiphas may, therefore, have adopted this latter view; or rather, without concerning himself about this question, he may have used the title "Son of God" in order to force Jesus to answer affirmatively: this would have enabled the High Priest to charge Him with blasphemy and to call for a vote of the assembly.

This time the Savior speaks. He is interrogated in the name of God, officially questioned by the highest dignitary of the theocratic nation, and unhesitatingly He proclaims, before the supreme assembly of the country, that He is really and truly the Messias. "Thou hast said it," He answered firmly. Some time before, at the foot of Mount Hermon, He had accepted Peter's confession: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." [445] Quite recently He accepted the Hosannas of the people as a legitimate homage. But in the present instance there is a something more, because it is He Himself who positively claims the Messianic character and divine sonship.

Supplementing and corroborating His assertion by a majestic declaration, which He utters with royal dignity and authority, He continues: "Nevertheless I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven." What calm vigor is in the words ("I say to you") which introduce this prophecy! It is most clearly connected with the vision of Daniel, in which the Son of Man, borne on the clouds of heaven, appears to "the Ancient of days," who confides to

[444] Henoch, X, v, 2; 4 Esdras 7:28 f.; 14:9.
[445] Matt. 16:16.

Him "power and glory and a kingdom," [446] and who, according to Psalm 9, seats Him at His own right hand as His viceroy endued with all His authority, or rather as His equal.

The Greek expression that we have translated as "hereafter," [447] means, literally, "beginning from this moment." It could not designate exclusively the period of the last judgment, as some commentators hold. Jesus envisaged the moment when He was going to be condemned as the beginning of His glorification. His Passion will become the starting-point of a new order of things. By this expression our Lord referred His judges to a near future which would attest that all His claims were just. In spite of His present state of humiliation and powerlessness, which will become aggravated in a few hours, He will soon appear to them as the Messias-God, sitting at the right hand of His Father. They were, indeed, the witnesses of the first rays of His glory, which were manifested by the miracles of Golgotha, the Resurrection, Pentecost, the miracles performed by the Apostles, and the rapid founding of the Church. Their immediate successors, and even several of themselves, beheld with their own eyes the destruction of Jerusalem, which also revealed Christ's all-powerful vengeance. All these events were as so many preludes and pledges of His still more glorious coming at the end of time.[448]

These words of Christ contain one of the most striking testimonies which He rendered to His own person; they sum up all the historic manifestations of His power through the ages. Not only does He affirm that He is the Messias, but He proclaims that He will prove by deeds the reality of His Messianic character. Further than this, He declares that He, the Son of Man, is truly the Son of God, equal to His heavenly

[446] Dan. 7 : 13 f.
[447] Matt., ἀπ' ἄρτι (Vulg., *amodo*); Luke, ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν (Vulg., *ex hoc.*)
[448] Matt. 24 : 27–31, and the parallel passages in St. Mark and St. Luke.

Father. Before His "hour" came, He had carefully avoided what might have aroused His enemies' hatred and hastened the execution of their criminal designs. He had maintained a most prudent reserve about His titles and His rights. Now that the hour willed by God and by Himself was come, He fearlessly lifted the veil and openly announced, before the highest and most powerful tribunal of His people, what He was and what He would do. His earthly mission is accomplished. They may put Him to death; that will add to His glorification.

Judges fond of the truth might easily have instituted an inquiry, subjecting the assertion of the accused to a thorough examination. Christ's life, His preaching and miracles, compared with this testimony, which He just solemnly rendered to Himself, contained the most undeniable and authentic proof of His divine mission. But there was no question of justice or investigation. They wanted His death, and the discussion had been directed toward a death sentence.

Caiphas, unmindful of his office of impartial presiding officer, continued to play the part of chief accuser. He accomplished his purpose. He succeeded in making the accused speak and in obtaining from Him a serious avowal, thanks to which it will be easy to have a death decree issued against Him. But he now proceeds with consummate skill.

The Orient has always been the land of outward manifestations: grief, indignation, and fright, in general the lively emotions, were represented by acts which, in themselves quite natural, followed conventional rules. Among the Jews, such was the case for the gesture prescribed when one heard a blasphemy or witnessed any sacrilegious act. The conventional action was to give signs of holy anger and to tear one's garments.[449] The Mosaic Law forbade the High Priest to in-

[449] This action is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament: Lev. 21:10; 4 Kings 18:37; Judith 14:17; Is. 37:1; Jer. 36:24; Joel 2:13. For the rules

dulge in this action when there was question of personal mourning,[450] but he was allowed to do so when a blasphemy was uttered in his presence. Caiphas therefore roughly seized the upper part of his garments,[451] as if he had just heard the most horrible blasphemy; and he cried out: "He hath blasphemed; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold now you have heard the blasphemy. What think you?" He was glad that he could dispense with witnesses, since a lengthy and minute interrogation, conducted with partiality, had shown the uselessness of that means for condemning the accused. But now he plays an unworthy comedy,[452] in order to suppress, not only a new series of witnesses, even of instructed witnesses, but also any deliberation on the part of the judges. What he asked was a vote by acclamation. He promptly obtained it from that servile assembly, worthy of its chief judge, whose hateful prejudice against our Lord they nearly all shared. But the law required that in criminal trials each judge must express his vote separately. Trampling the law under foot on this point as on so many others, the Sanhedrin unanimously rendered a sentence of death against Jesus. Had they not assembled to condemn Him, and was it not for this avowed purpose that the trial had been held? The members of the Great Council who were known to be favorable to Christ—perhaps there were others besides Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea—had probably not been summoned or had absented themselves when they knew the purpose of this meeting.

We must now go back a short time, to witness another, far

made by the rabbis in this matter, see Buxtorf, *Lexicon Talmudicum*, p. 2146; Otho, *Lexicon Rabbinicum*, under the words *"Blasphemus"* and *"Laceratio."*

[450] Lev. 10:6; 21:10.

[451] St. Matthew and St. Mark are quite correct in using the plural (*τὰ ἱματία, τοὺς χιτῶνας*); the rabbis said that not only the outer tunic was to be torn, but all one's garments, except the shirt. Ordinarily the rich wore several tunics.

[452] A. Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 390.

less important but also very sorrowful scene, which took place in Caiphas' house, while the Savior was being judged and condemned. We refer to Peter's threefold denial of his Master. This incident is dramatically related by the four Evangelists,[453] with slight variations of detail, which are due to the choice which each of them made, or which tradition made for them, among the words spoken during this little drama. "St. Peter's threefold denial consists, not in three separate acts, but in three distinct circumstances under which the Apostle denies his Master several times." [454] The Savior's prediction, "Thou wilt deny Me thrice," must not be restricted to three expressions of denial from the Apostle's lips, for, by adding together the different circumstances under which Peter denied Jesus according to the four Evangelists, we would obtain, according to the reckoning of different exegetes, not three, but six, nay seven, or even eight denials. Prophecy allows a broader sense. By combining all these denials, we obtain three groups of questions and answers, or three successive acts, each made up of various scenes during which Peter, questioned again and again by different persons, repeatedly denies our Lord.[455] If this simple principle be admitted, it becomes at once evident that what are sometimes held to be real contradictions, are only another example of the slight divergencies that are to be found in the accounts of all historians who have written independently on the same subject.

When the Divine Master was arrested at Gethsemani, Peter fled at the same time as did the other Apostles. Shortly

[453] Matt. 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:55–62; John 18:15–18, 25–27. As in many other instances, St. Matthew's and St. Mark's narratives follow each other closely, whereas St. Luke's and St. John's are more independent.

[454] Fouard, *Passion de N.-S. Jésus-Christ*, p. 186. Bengel pointed out this important distinction in his *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* (published in 1742), p. 154: *"Abnegatio ad plures plurium interrogationes, facta uno paroxysmo, pro una numeratur."*

[455] See Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean*, p. 335.

afterwards, however, ashamed of his weakness, and having partly recovered his composure, he retraced his steps and followed a little distance behind the band that was leading Jesus to the house of Annas. A like feeling had caused the beloved disciple also to return. Together they both were at the gate of Caiphas' palace. We owe this detail, as also the following, to St. John himself.[456] According to his custom, he does not name himself in his account, but after his manner of speaking when there is question of himself, and according to the traditional view very justly adopted by most commentators,[457] it is scarcely possible to suppose that any other Apostle is meant.

John here informs us that he was known to the High Priest, that is, to Caiphas. Just what was the nature of their relations? Many hypotheses have been suggested, but without seeming to solve this unimportant problem. Some degree of blood-relationship between them has even been proposed; but this supposition has no proof. We should remark that among the ancient Jews the different classes of society did not live so much apart from one another as is the case among us today; this fact somewhat simplifies the question. We should also recall that, at that time, St. John either owned or rented a house at Jerusalem.[458] He was known, not only to the High Priest, but also to the latter's servants, and these let him enter the courtyard of the palace, while Peter remained in the street. When the beloved disciple noticed that his fellow-Apostle was not following him, he said a word for him to the portress; the two Apostles passed through the gateway and then separated. In the case of both of them, this step was certainly an act of real courage which to some extent atoned for their previous flight.

Nevertheless it was a misfortune for Peter that he obtained

[456] John 18: 15 f.
[457] Fillion, *op. cit.*, p. 330.
[458] John 19: 27.

this privilege. He hardly foresaw the trial that awaited him. Scarcely had he entered, when the maid-servant who kept the gate [459] boldly and contemptuously asked him: "Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?" Surprised and disturbed at this sudden question, which showed that he was recognized as belonging to Christ's immediate followers, he answered: "I am not."

At the season of the Pasch, the nights are usually cold in Jerusalem, which is situated at an altitude of about 2500 feet. Therefore the servants of Caiphas and of the Sanhedrin had lighted a large fire in the open courtyard, around which arose the buildings that formed the palace. About this fire they were gathered, warming themselves. Peter joined this group. But the attention of another servant-maid had been attracted by his serious and sorrowful face, which was in contrast with the attitude of the rest of those present. After a scrutinizing look at him,[460] she said: "Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth." If the servants had arrested him to bring him before the court, we may rightly suppose that he would have answered with courage; but, more and more discountenanced, he had the weakness to reply: "I neither know nor understand what thou sayest." That was the first group of his three denials. How evasive he is, while affecting not to know of whom or of what they are speaking! According to St. Mark, it was at this moment the cock crowed for the first time.

Peter should have left the place, which was so full of danger for him; but he had entered the palace "that he might see the end," as St. Matthew says,[461] that is, to learn as soon as possible the outcome of the trial and the fate in store for his beloved Master; and he was loath to withdraw. Therefore he

[459] In ancient times, in Judea as elsewhere, this duty was often entrusted to women. Cf. 2 Kings 4:6 (according to the Septuagint); Acts 12:13; Josephus, *Ant.*, VII, ii, 1; Plautus, *Curculio*, I, i, 76.

[460] Mark 14:67: ἐμβλέψασα (Vulg., *aspiciens*).

[461] Matt. 26:58.

remained at a little distance from the fire, which cast a lurid light on all sides. One of those present, looking at him, asked him the same question as had the portress: "Art not thou also one of His disciples?" Again he answered, "I am not." He was becoming more and more annoyed and took a few steps toward the gate; but another maid-servant said to those near her: "This man also was with Jesus of Nazareth." Peter again denied, saying: "I know not the man," and confirmed his denial by an oath.[462] This was the second group of denials.

An hour later, as we learn from St. Luke, some of the servants of Caiphas and of the Sanhedrin came to Peter and said to him, this time in most positive terms: "Surely thou also art one of those people"—by this expression of contempt they meant the disciples of Jesus—"for even thy speech doth discover thee." In a previous remark upon the language then spoken in Palestine,[463] we said that the Aramaic idiom, as spoken in Galilee, was marked by certain peculiarities, certain defects of pronunciation, which at once betrayed the birthplace of those who spoke it. Further, at Jerusalem especially, the phrase "to be a Galilean" often signified, in the present case, to belong to one's entourage. Christ's most ardent and numerous disciples were in fact from that province. Peter, therefore, had betrayed himself. And one of those present, a relative of that Malchus whose ear had been cut by the Apostle at the time of the Savior's arrest, thought he recognized the author of that attack. "Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?" he asked. This was too much. Peter, more and more beside himself on account of the desolating incidents that had precipitated themselves upon him, denied his Master with still greater energy, again swearing that he

[462] In the Second Gospel, the use of the imperfect, ἤρνεῖτο, indicates a continued, repeated action.

[463] Volume I, page 108. See also Dalman, *Grammatik des jüdisch.-palästin. Aramäisch,* pp. 4–5, 42–44; Neubauer, *Géographie du Talmud,* p. 184.

did not know Him. He even went so far as to utter curses and anathemas against himself, calling down evil and destruction upon himself if what he said were not the truth. "I know not this man of whom you speak," he replied. What has become of his glorious confession? What has happened to his fine promises, which were recalled to his mind by the second crowing of the cock, just as he uttered his third denial?

When he heard that strident cry,[464] he suddenly remembered the prophecy which the Savior made a few hours before, and grasped the full gravity of his fault. His grief increased when Jesus, who after his condemnation was being led from the audience chamber to the place where he was to be confined for the rest of the night, while passing near Peter, turned upon him a searching look[465] which declared that He knew all. Peter, his soul pierced with sorrow and his heart crushed, quickly left the palace of Caiphas and burst into bitter tears.[466]

The historical truthfulness and honesty of the four Evangelists shines forth in the lines which each of them devotes to Peter's denial. They do not soften it, they make no attempt to attenuate even lightly this sin by the Prince of the Apostles. They set forth the facts as they took place. But we must not enlarge Peter's fault beyond measure. His faith did not weaken, it was not shaken. His denial, a simple result of fear, was quite superficial. His great wrong consisted in not sufficiently mistrusting himself; it was this presumption which imprudently cast him into the midst of danger. And he was able to redeem his sin by bemoaning it throughout his life, by winning many souls to his beloved Master, and by dying for Him on a cross.

[464] Probably he had not noticed the first cock-crow.

[465] Ἐνεβλέψεν (Vulg., *respexit*). This incident is reported only by St. Luke.

[466] On the obscure phrase ἐπιβαλὼν ἔκλαυσε (Vulg., *cœpit flere*) and the various explanations given it, see Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Marc*, p. 208. The Vulgate furnishes an excellent translation.

Immediately after the death sentence had been pronounced against Christ, a revolting scene took place, which the Synoptics relate briefly.[467] Whereas everywhere, unless at times among barbarous tribes, those condemned to death are respected as something sacred from the moment of the sentence until its execution, Jesus was the object of most unworthy treatment. The vulgar guards in whose hands this gentle, innocent Victim was left, subjected Him to cruel insults. Some brutally spit in His face; others slapped Him and struck Him with their fists; others, still bolder, after blindfolding Him, tauntingly asked Him: "Prophesy, who is it that struck Thee?" Since He claimed to be a prophet, they derisively asked Him to make use of His supernatural powers. And many other blasphemies they offered Him. All this He endured without murmuring, with heroic patience. Isaias had clearly foretold this painful scene, when he placed these words on the Messias' lips: "I have given my body to the strikers, and my cheeks to them that plucked my beard. I have not turned away my face from them that rebuked me and spit upon me. The Lord God is my helper, therefore am I not confounded." [468] How great was the hatred of the priests and Scribes and other members of the Sanhedrin, who tolerated these infamies, in which, as St. Luke says, the subordinate officers of the Temple police took part! This detail is unfortunately only too conformable to the harsh and often cruel practices of ancient times.

"As soon as it was day, the ancients of the people and the chief priests and Scribes came together, and they brought Him into their council." Some commentators identify this passage of the Third Gospel and the few lines that amplify it,[469] with the description of the session of the Sanhedrin cited above by SS. Matthew and Mark. But this view is hardly

[467] Matt. 26:67 f.; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63–65.
[468] Is. 50:6 f.
[469] Luke 22:66–71.

acceptable, because that session had taken place during the night and shortly after the Savior's arrest, whereas this session was held in the morning, "as soon as it was day," as the author of the Third Gospel expressly notes. Moreover, the two other Synoptics clearly suppose that the Sanhedrin held two separate meetings [470] with regard to the trial of Jesus. But, while they recount the former meeting in some detail, they merely mention the latter. St. Luke, on the contrary, who says nothing of the night session, sketches the morning session, which was short and held mostly as a matter of form. It was considered necessary to save appearances. In fact, it seems to have been contrary to the Jewish law of that time to consider capital offenses at night, so much so that a death sentence passed at a night session was regarded as null and void. They wished, therefore, in this respect also, to give the trial a semblance of legality, to begin it again at daybreak so as to ratify it officially. It was likewise important to determine the points of accusation that should presently be offered to Pilate, with a view the more easily to obtain his condemnation of Christ. But they were in a hurry to conclude the matter.

St. Luke does not mention any hearing of witnesses. But the words that had served as the occasion for the death sentence are repeated to Christ: "If Thou be the Christ, tell us," the presiding judge, Caiphas, asked Him. The Savior replied: "If I shall tell you, you will not believe Me; and if I shall also ask you, you will not answer Me nor let Me go." In this dilemma there is an indirect but energetic protest against the unjust proceedings of the Sanhedrin. Although Jesus had plainly informed the Jewish magistrates about His divine mission when they asked Him, although He had tried to argue with them, He had met with nothing but the sternness of hatred on the part of these impassioned men. So true was this

[470] Matt. 27:1 f.; Mark 15:1.

fact, that all the members of the Great Council had to remain silent. Jesus repeated, in briefer form, His solemn prophecy of the night session: "But hereafter the Son of Man shall be sitting on the right hand of the power of God." Again He thus evoked before His enemies the glorious and dread image of the Son of Man endued with a power which nothing would be able to resist. All of them thereupon cried out: "Art Thou then the Son of God?" They had no difficulty in understanding that Christ, in thus speaking of Himself, was declaring Himself equal to God, as He had affirmed in even more precise terms a few hours before. "I am," He replied. At once they shouted in a tumultuous manner, unworthy of honest judges: "What need we any farther testimony? [471] We ourselves have heard it from His own mouth." Then they confirmed the death sentence.[472]

III. The Civil Trial Before the Roman Governor

At this point begins the second act of our Lord's trial. From the religious jurisdiction we pass to the civil; from the Sanhedrin, to the pretorium; from Caiphas, to Pontius Pilate. In this part of the trial, as in the preceding, we shall also find three phases. A first meeting is held in the pretorium, a second at the palace of Herod Antipas, a third again in the pretorium. We shall witness this striking contrast: the members of the Sanhedrin strive mightily to obtain from the Roman procurator a ratification of their death sentence; Pilate, on the contrary, tries to hinder its execution. Both

[471] This alludes to the many witnesses who had been heard at the night session.

[472] We will not attempt to point out in detail the irregularities committed by the Sanhedrin during the Savior's religious trial, because we have only an imperfect knowledge of the juridical procedure then in force among the Jews. The Talmud supplies precise information on this point, but of a rather uncertain date, so that we are unable to make a scientific use of it.

resort to clever maneuvers and try to outdo each other in subtlety and trickery. In this contest, Pilate, the more powerful of the contestants, is shamefully vanquished. Among the members of the Sanhedrin, the chief priests, the religious leaders, now take the matter of the trial in hand and with passionate earnestness stir the populace to their aid, imparting to them their own fanaticism. The Savior, by energetically rising up against the abuses they had tolerated in the Temple, threatened to restrict not only their authority, but also one of the most lucrative sources of their income.

The accounts are again abundant from the faithful pens of the four Evangelists, and the details become more and more tragic. St. Matthew stresses the guilt of the Sanhedrin and the Jewish rabble; the impression emerging from his narrative is that the real executioners of Christ were neither Pilate nor the Roman soldiers, however great their responsibility, but the Jewish authorities and those of the people who became their accomplices. This real and striking fact is not brought out so emphatically by St. Mark, who abridges considerably at this point and, in his vibrant, lifelike manner, leads his readers to the sorrowful denouement. St. Luke's narrative has the advantage of placing in relief the accusations made against Christ by His enemies, and the perfidy with which, before Pilate, they change their religious grievance into an accusation of political crime. To the author of the Third Gospel we also owe the episode of the Savior being brought before the tetrarch Herod. Moreover, each of the Evangelists preserves certain special details, by combining which we are able to reconstruct the story of the civil trial. St. John provides the largest part of these details which supplement and explain the Synoptic accounts. Thanks mostly to him, we can form an exact notion of what took place in the pretorium during those hours which have reëchoed in history. None of the Evangelists excels him in revealing to us the vicissitudes of the con-

test which we mentioned above. His description is a masterpiece of psychology.

Immediately after the morning session, which ended with the final death sentence against Christ, the members of the Sanhedrin—without any loss of time, so eager were they to glut their hatred—went to the pretorium, bringing their Prisoner with them.[473] They took the precaution of binding Him again, for they had removed his bonds when He was safely in Caiphas' house. The streets were filled with pilgrims on their way to the Temple, and there was a fear that Christ's disciples might rescue Him by force. The high assembly was present in almost full numbers,[474] because it wished to impress Pilate by giving all possible solemnity to its step, and the more easily to obtain from him the confirmation of the sentence it had just passed. The members of the Sanhedrin hardly suspected that they were then fulfilling part of the prophecies made by our Lord about His Passion and death: "They [the chief priests and Scribes and ancients] shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles."[475] Even less did they suspect that, when the hour of their punishment should come, they in turn would be delivered to the Romans, along with the whole unfortunate nation whose unworthy leaders they were. We have seen that it was still early in the morning,[476] about six o'clock; but Roman courts opened at daybreak,[477] and the members of the Sanhedrin must have notified Pilate of their arrival.

Was there need of this proceeding with regard to Rome's official representative? Since the Sanhedrin had the right to pass death sentences, had it not also the right to execute them? It did not have such a right, as we shall presently hear its

[473] Matt. 27:2; Mark 15:1; Luke 23:1; John 18:28.
[474] St. Luke: "The whole multitude." But this expression must not be pressed.
[475] Mark 10:33; cf. Matt. 20:18 f.; Luke 18:32.
[476] Matt. 27:1; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66; John 18:28.
[477] Seneca, *De Ira*, II, 7: *"Tot millia prima luce ad forum properantia."*

members declare: "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." [478] And the Talmud relates [479] that, forty years before the destruction of the Temple, the Romans "had taken from Israel judgment of life and death," a power which in juridical language is called the *ius gladii*. Forty years is a round number, after the Oriental manner of speaking. In fact, it is probable that this prohibition goes back to the deposition of Archelaus in the year 7 of our era,[480] when Judea became a Roman province.[481] The power to pass sentence of death was therefore a derisive concession which Rome had made to the Jewish Sanhedrin. Nothing short of dire necessity would lead these haughty men to implore the assistance of a Roman magistrate, especially of a man of the type of Pilate. For this reason we find them at the pretorium at such an early hour.

The word "pretorium" at first designated, among the Romans, the tent of the commanding general in a temporary or permanent camp. Later the word was used to denote the place occupied, either regularly or temporarily, by the higher officers of the Empire.[482] At Jerusalem it was Pilate's residence that bore this name. Where was that residence in the year of the Savior's Passion? It is difficult to answer this question, which is of no small interest to Christian piety. The Evangelists do not furnish any exact indication as to what part of the city was occupied by the pretorium. All they tell us is that the building where Pilate resided had before it an open square, where the Jews gathered in a dense throng, and that it had an inner courtyard. Tradition, usually so valuable a source of information in such cases, rather adds to

[478] John 18:31.

[479] *Sanhedr.*, I, 1, and II, 7.

[480] See Volume I, pages 133 f.

[481] Schürer, *Geschichte des jüd. Volkes*, 4th ed., II, 261.

[482] Daremberg and Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Romaines et Grecques*, VII, 640.

the difficulty in the present instance, for it changed in the course of time. In the year 333, it placed the pretorium in the Tyropoean valley; at the time of the Crusades, not far from the Cenacle; only in the fourteenth century did it fix it in the Antonia citadel, located at the northwest corner of the Temple and serving as a barracks for the Roman garrison. If we consult contemporary records, we find that King Herod had enlarged and embellished this old citadel, constructed by the Hasmonean princes, and changed the name Baris to Antonia in honor of Marc Antony. In it was a sumptuous palace,[483] where Pilate used to instal himself at the periods of Jewish festivals, because from there he could more easily watch over the approaches of the Temple, where uprisings often broke out. We also know that Herod the Great built to the northwest of the high city, beside the present Jaffa gate, another palace of extraordinary magnificence,[484] flanked by three enormous towers—the Hippic tower, the Phasael tower, and the Mariamne tower; in this palace the Roman procurators several times resided.[485] Many commentators and Palestinologists consider this place to be the veritable site of the pretorium; others favor the Xystos, a wide square surrounded with porticoes, located west of the Temple walls in the Tyropoean valley; still others prefer the Antonia citadel, upon the ancient site of which are now venerated the mysteries of Christ's scourging, His crowning with thorns, the *Ecce homo,* and Pilate's ratification of the Sanhedrin's death sentence.[486] On

[483] Josephus, *Ant.,* XV, xi, 4; XVIII, iv, 3; *Bell. Iud.,* I, xxi, 1; V, iv, 2; v, 8.

[484] Josephus, *Bell. Iud.,* V, iv, 4; cf. Keim, *Geschichte Jesu,* IV, 360.

[485] Josephus, *Bell. Iud.,* II, xiv, 8; xv, 1 and 5; V, v, 8; Philo, *Leg. ad Caium,* 38 and 39.

[486] On this difficult question, see Belser, *Die Geschichte des Leidens . . . ,* I 333; *La Palestine,* by Professors of Notre-Dame de France à Jérusalem, 2d ed., pp. 97–100, 106–114; Barnabé, *Le Prétoire de Pilate et la Forteresse Antonia;* Zanecchia, *La Palestine d'Aujourd'hui,* II, 349–359; Legendre's excellent article in Vigouroux' *Dictionnaire de la Bible,* Vol. 5, cols. 622–639, under the word "Prétoire"; Fillion, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible,* pl. 14.

any hypothesis, the distance from Caiphas' palace to Pilate's actual residence was not very great.

While the members of the Sanhedrin, accompanied by their escort, who were brutally dragging the august Prisoner, rapidly covered this distance, which represents the second part of what is called the Way of Captivity,[487] Heaven's vengeance reached Judas and prepared for him a horrible end, befitting his crime.[488] When the traitor saw that the Savior was finally condemned to death and that His judges were themselves leading Him to the governor's house to deliver Him up, he saw the enormity of his crime. Was he unaware, when selling his Master for a paltry sum, that matters would reach this extremity? Sometimes it has wrongly been supposed so.[489] It is impossible that, from the first moment of his treason, he was unaware of the fatal ending that would issue from it, because the passionate hatred of the Jewish authorities toward Christ was a secret to no one. But it is a frequently mentioned psychological phenomenon[490] that great criminals often do not grasp the full horror of their crimes until after committing them; until then they are, as it were, blinded by passion, hate, or some other like impulse. In this sense, therefore, Judas now becomes filled with horror for his infamous betrayal, although he deliberately planned it and carried it out. In this same sense it is here said of him, not exactly that he repented, but simply that he wished he had not committed his crime.[491]

[487] For the first part, see p. 459, *supra*.

[488] St. Matthew is the only one of the Evangelists to relate this scene (Matt. 27:3–10).

[489] We have already discussed the attempts that have been made to exonerate the traitor. See Vol. II, pp. 629–632.

[490] *E. g.*, by Tacitus, *Annal.*, XIV, 10: *"Perfecto demum scelere, magnitudo eius intellecta est."*

[491] This difference is well expressed by the Evangelist, who uses, not the verb μετανοέω, which would indicate true repentance, a real moral change, but μεταμέλομαι, which signifies only a change of thought or feeling.

True repentance would have produced in him something quite different from despair and suicide.

Under the impression of his violent remorse, he resolved to rid himself as quickly as possible of the money he had received as the price of his odious bargain. As it had gratified his sorry avarice, so now it burnt his hands and he hastened to return it to those from whom he had received it. Coming to the chief priests in the Temple enclosure, with haggard look and contracted features, he openly confessed the iniquity of his act. In a low voice he said to them: "I have sinned, in betraying innocent blood." Though issuing from such unclean lips, this testimony possesses particular force. He who thus proclaims the Savior's innocence is a disciple who had lived in intimate association with Him for many years and had studied Him at close range with hostile feelings. The gnawing worm that was tearing his soul left him no truce until he had made this avowal. "What is that to us? Look thou to it," the hierarchs coldly replied. What difference did Christ's innocence make to them? They had condemned Him, not because He was deserving of death, but because they hated Him. All their iniquity is disclosed by these few words. Of what importance to the Jewish priests was this tardy regret on the part of their accomplice? For them Judas had been merely a vulgar tool; he was now free to wreck himself, if such was his wish. They cruelly abandoned him to his fate.

Driven to extremity by this disdainful reply, Judas passes through the Court of Israel, then through that of the Priests,[492] and goes perhaps into the very sanctuary,[493] although the laity were strictly forbidden to enter it, or at least into the vestibule, and there throws down the thirty shekels which had been the occasion of his ruin. Then out of the city

[492] Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* pl. 99.

[493] In the Greek: ἐν τῷ ναῷ, an expression which may designate the Holy Place. (See Vol. I, p. 168.)

he goes, crosses the valley of Hinnom, climbs the steep slope of the Hill of Evil Counsel,[494] and stops a little west of the place where the valley of Hinnom joins that of Cedron. There a few rough crags stand out. Around his neck he places his long girdle or a rope with which he had provided himself upon leaving the Temple. Then, fastening it to a projecting rock or to some tree, he leaped into space. At this point the Evangelist's account stops. St. Peter supplemented it in his discourse on Ascension Day, when he proposed to the disciples gathered in the Cenacle the question of choosing a successor to Judas. He said: "He indeed hath possessed a field of the reward of iniquity; and being hanged, burst asunder in the midst; and all his bowels gushed out."[495] This circumstance is to be explained by the breaking of the rope or of the branch of the tree or of the rocky projection from which he hanged himself.

It was not the traitor himself who acquired the field referred to. The purchase was made by the chief priests, as St. Matthew tells us; it is by way of a figure of speech that St. Peter attributes it to Judas, and very justly so, since that piece of land was bought with the money which had been so horribly acquired. The Evangelist first shows us the chief priests embarrassed by the thirty shekels which Judas had returned to them in spite of themselves. "It is not lawful," they said, "to put them into the corbona [treasury], because it is the price of blood." The Mosaic Law did, in fact, forbid putting into the Temple treasury any money coming from sources that were themselves defiled or were considered so by custom.[496] In the eyes of the priests the thirty shekels were tainted with blood and morally unclean. This was a curious scruple, recalling the reproach which our Lord addressed to the Pharisees a few days before, when He said: "Blind guides, who strain

[494] See Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible*, pl. 14.
[495] Acts 1:18.
[496] Deut. 23:18. See also the tractate *Sanhedr.*, fol. 1, 2.

out a gnat, and swallow a camel."[497] Had not the chief priests lightheartedly taken the responsibility for the murder of one who was innocent? They deliberated together as to what use should be made of this money. It was decided that the thirty shekels should be used to buy a potter's field in the neighborhood of the place where Judas had committed suicide and that a cemetery should be established there for Jewish strangers who should die at Jerusalem. This field was thereafter called Haceldama, an Aramaic word meaning "Field of Blood,"[498] referring to the blood of Christ, who had been sold by Judas for thirty shekels. Even to-day this sinister place is pointed out to pilgrims. Its authenticity is vouched for by numerous early testimonies.[499]

In the use which the chief priests made of the money returned by Judas, St. Matthew sees the fulfilment of an Old Testament prophecy: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremias the prophet, saying: And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was prized, whom they prized of the children of Israel. And they gave them unto the potter's field, as the Lord appointed to me."

In this text the Evangelist seems to combine various passages from the prophecies of Jeremias[500] and from those of Zacharias;[501] the combination thus obtained he attributes to the more famous of the two authors. Like the Jewish paraphrasts, St. Matthew quotes the Hebrew text in a way that best harmonizes with the historical fulfilment.

We left the Divine Victim and His judges on the way to the

[497] Matt. 23:24.

[498] More exactly: *Hakal dema.* Cf. Dalman, *Grammatik des jüd.-paläst. Aramäisch,* 2d ed., p. 212.

[499] Chauvet and Isambert, *Syrie, Palestine,* p. 321; *La Palestine,* by Professors of Notre-Dame de France, 2d ed., p. 206; Robinson, *Palästina,* II, 178–180.

[500] Jer. 18:2 f.; 32:6–15.

[501] Zach. 11:13. This contains the chief part of the text. As to the difficulty resulting from the application of Jeremias' prophecy by the Evangelist, see Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Matthieu,* p. 533.

pretorium. When they reached the entrance to the palace, the members of the Sanhedrin notified Pilate of their presence and of the urgent reason which had brought them; but neither they nor their servants entered the palace. According to the Jewish ritual,[502] the houses of pagans were regarded as impure. By crossing the threshold of the pretorium, the Sanhedrists would have contracted a legal stain lasting until evening, with the result that, on this great and holy day of the Pasch, they would have been prohibited from eating their part of the sacred victims, as we explained above.[503] This was another monstrous scruple, in which we recognize the baneful influence of the Scribes' teaching and the legal prescriptions.

Pilate's full Latin name was Pontius Pilatus. He may have belonged to the *gens Pontia,* famous in the early years of Roman history. Pilatus was only a surname (at that time called "cognomen"), the source of which is difficult to ascertain. Pilate was the fifth Roman governor or, according to the official title, procurator,[504] of Judea and Samaria, which had been united into a single province. This office he held from the twelfth year of Tiberius (A. D. 26) to the year 36. Sacred and profane accounts of his administration show how difficult and delicate was the task of a governor of Judea at that period, and what little effort Pilate made to conciliate the Jews. The letter of Agrippa I to Caligula, cited by Philo in his famous *Legatio ad Caium,*[505] gives a portrait of Pilate that is probably too black. Its general correctness, however, is but too well confirmed by history. That letter says that he was "of inflexible character and arrogantly harsh." It accuses him of "venality, violence, rapine, ill-treatment, vexations, numer-

[502] Acts 10:28; 11:2 f.; the Talmudic tractate *Ohel,* XVIII, 7; Schürer, *Geschichte des jüd. Volkes,* 4th ed., II, 69.

[503] *Supra,* pp. 369, 372. See also Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean,* p. 336.

[504] *Procurator* (not *praeses,* as the Vulgate says); in Greek ἐπίτροπος, rather than ἡγεμών.

[505] Chap. 38.

ous executions without trials, countless and intolerable cruelties." Detesting the Jews and understanding nothing of their national temperament or their religious feelings, he claimed to rule them in accordance with his own will and to make them yield in all things and in spite of everything. Since at times he was as feeble and hesitant as he was usually intractable, he himself contributed to the weakening of his authority. Thus he several times was vanquished by those over whom he thought he could easily triumph. Finally he was completely crushed by them. His stubbornness and blundering lack of diplomacy more than once gave rise to insurrections, which he had to stifle in blood.[506] In short, without conscience or moral fiber, his was a commonplace soul. His contempt for Judaism is shown without disguise in the attitude he now takes toward the members of the Sanhedrin. It is with evident repugnance that he lends himself to the dishonorable part they wish him to play. Almost from the first he shows sympathy for Jesus, whose innocence he readily perceives. Yet, after a few attempts at half-hearted resistance, he yields in cowardly fashion. The result is referred to by Tacitus, who says: *"Christus Tiberio imperitante per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio adfectus erat."* [507]

All four Gospels mention the taking of Jesus to Pilate by the Sanhedrin as an important fact.[508] This we can easily understand, since another trial is to begin, under a different jurisdiction. We have already said that St. John, by the abundance of the information which he furnishes at this point, enables us, especially if we supplement his account by the other Evangelists, to form an exact notion of the events, and even of their inner motives. His account consists of several

[506] See Vigouroux, *Dictionnaire de la Bible,* Vol. I, cols. 430–431. St. Luke (13:1) tells us briefly of one of those tragic episodes.

[507] *Annal.,* XV, 44. On this passage see Brunsmann-Preuss, *A Handbook of Fundamental Theology,* Vol. II, St. Louis, 1929, pp. 253 ff.

[508] Matt. 27:2; Mark 15:1; Luke 23:1; John 18:28.

little scenes, which are enacted alternately inside and outside the pretorium: within, between Pilate and Christ; outside, between Pilate and the members of the Sanhedrin. What we have called the first phase of the civil trial,[509] contains three of these scenes, into which the details recorded by the Synoptics [510] can be harmoniously fitted.

We now see the Divine Victim in another court and before another judge. Upon reaching the pretorium, the servants of the Sanhedrin placed Him in the hands of the legionaries, who then brought Him into the courtyard or some room of the palace. The Savior's accusers refused to enter the house of the governor, and the latter, yielding to their religious prejudices, consented to meet them upon the outer balcony. After hearing them briefly set forth their petition, he asked them: "What accusation bring you against this man?" This preliminary question was quite natural because, to pass final judgment, Pilate had to know the reasons on which the death sentence was based. Furthermore, the Romans prided themselves, in cases of this sort, upon proceeding with the utmost guaranties of justice for the accused. Their court sessions were public, whereas the Sanhedrin had condemned Christ in secret session. It was a principle of Roman procedure that no one could be condemned except for proved crimes. *"Nocens nisi accusatus fuerit, condemnari non potest; ne quis indicta causa condemnetur,"* said the Roman law. And Roman officials, even though skeptical and arbitrary, usually regulated their conduct on this wise principle.[511]

The Sanhedrists' reply shows that the procurator's question took them by surprise. They were hoping to obtain a confirmation of their death sentence offhand, without any gen-

[509] *Supra,* page 479.

[510] Matt. 27:11–14; Mark 15:2–5; Luke 23:2–5; John 18:29–38.

[511] We have several examples of this in the Acts of the Apostles: 17:6; 18:12; 25:6. Cf. Josephus, *Bell. Iud.,* II, ix, 3; xiv, 8.

uine inquiry being made into it; they now feared a judicial investigation that might end with the Prisoner's acquittal. In an embarrassed and evasive manner, but with affected pride, as though their honor were at stake, they answered: "If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up to thee." The word "malefactor" may designate the perpetrator of heinous crimes; but it is so vague as to have no significance in the present case, because a court requires that an accused person be charged with some definite crime.

Pilate saw that he was being treated haughtily and that they were trying to make him *"executorem sententiae, non arbitrium causae."* [512] He answered dryly: "Take Him you, and judge Him according to your law." This was bitter irony, since these Jews had just passed judgment on Christ according to their law and were at the pretorium precisely to obtain a ratification of their sentence. They were forced to assume a less assertive manner and humbly confess their powerlessness, saying: "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." Then understanding that the procurator would ratify their death sentence only with full knowledge of the cause, the members of the Sanhedrin brought against Jesus many grave accusations, to which they were careful to give a political coloring. Had they mentioned only the religious side of their grievances, that is, the pretended blasphemy and the claim to the Messiaship, they knew that Pilate would have given no heed to their request. They had recourse to this argument only later, when they found it would serve their cause.

First, they accuse Jesus of the crime of *lèse majesté* against the emperor, charging Him with being a claimant to the throne and with being a dangerous revolutionist. This is the accusation they make: "We have found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying

[512] St. Leo, *Sermon, in Passione, 2.*

that He is Christ the king." [513] "We have found," they say—as if they had really convicted Christ of these three crimes, which would have made of Him a public agitator and a menace to Caesar and the Empire. The second part of their accusation was a calumny, which had been refuted a short time before by the solution of a case of conscience proposed to our Lord by the disciples of the Pharisees.[514] But it followed naturally from the other two. If, as the members of the Sanhedrin claimed, Christ intended to have Himself proclaimed King, He could not allow His followers to continue paying tribute to the Romans or any longer to manifest this sign of subjection. To give their declaration an appearance of truth, these calumniators perfidiously distorted the meaning of the word "Christ"—a sacred word for true Israelites!—by adding to it the title of king, as if Jesus had been trying to stir up the whole Jewish nation against Tiberius; whereas, only a year before, He had thwarted the attempt of an enthusiastic multitude to proclaim Him king.[515] Nevertheless the choice of the charge was a clever stroke, because it could hardly fail to make an impression on the governor. And to some extent it could be proved, since the Savior's preaching and miracles had really produced a movement of keen interest throughout the country, although in a sense quite opposite to the Sanhedrists' false testimony.

This time the accusation was clear and precise. Pilate returned to the pretorium and ordered Jesus brought before him to make a personal inquiry. St. John records the essential points of the dialogue that took place between the judge

[513] The Gospel of Marcion (cited by St. Epiphanius, *Haer,* XLII) and the *Codex Colberti in Luc.* 23:5, add two other charges: *"Subvertentem legem et prophetas, et filios nostros et uxores avertit a nobis."* This last detail alludes to the friendliness shown to our Lord by children and their mothers. Of course, this whole addition is apocryphal.

[514] Matt. 22:15–22; Mark 12:13–19; Luke 20:20–26.

[515] John 6:14 f.

and the accused, very likely in Greek. According to the four Gospels, Pilate's first question was: "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" The emphatic placing of the pronoun before the verb, both in the Greek text and in the Vulgate,[516] indicates astonishment. Our Lord in His actual condition, dressed as a man of the common people, bearing on His features the marks of great fatigue, with His hands bound as though He were a veritable criminal, hardly presented the appearance of an aspirant for royalty, of a rival to the Emperor. Yet His dignity, His calmness, and the holiness shining from His face, produced an imposing effect. He answered the governor by asking another question, as was His custom: "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or have others told it thee of Me?" By "others" He meant His enemies.

Let us here note that our Lord answers in one fashion when questioned privately by Pilate, and in another when questioned in public before His accusers. In the former case He implicitly recognizes the governor's right to examine Him, and replies simply to his questions. In the latter, He remains silent, as He did during most of the religious trial, because only unjust charges were brought against Him. Pilate was unable to grasp this distinction; and therefore, as St. Matthew remarks, he was greatly surprised at Christ's silence.

To our Lord's question Pilate answered: "Am I a Jew? Thy own nation [517] and the chief priests have delivered Thee up to me. What hast Thou done?" Evidently his Roman pride had been wounded. He says contemptuously that he is not a member of the Jewish race. It would seem that already he distrusted the accusers, since he calls for the direct testimony of the accused. Indirectly he acknowledges that the question, "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" had not occurred to him sponta-

[516] Σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; *Tu es rex Judaeorum?*

[517] *I. e.*, its official representatives, the members of the Sanhedrin.

neously, but had been suggested by others—we know by whom.

Ignoring Pilate's second question ("What hast Thou done?"), Jesus answered the first question briefly, in truly royal language: "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from hence." He acknowledges that He is at the head of a kingdom, but of a kingdom that is in no way political or earthly—as evidenced by His being so completely abandoned; and His kingdom contains no menace to the Roman Empire. He wishes to reign only over minds and hearts, that He may sanctify them and lead them to Heaven, where His kingship will be eternally and ineffably manifested.

Pilate was surprised, and again asked: "Art Thou a king then?" [518] With majestic dignity, our Lord answered: "Thou sayest, that I am a king." His declaration could not have been firmer and clearer, especially after the explanation He had just given.[519] Continuing to describe His kingship, He said: "For this was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth." The spread of truth in its loftiest and most perfect form, especially in its religious form, was the aim of His reign or, as He implies, of His In-

[518] The pronoun is again very emphatic in the Greek, and this time is placed at the end of the sentence: *Οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ σύ?*

[519] Christ used the expressions: "Thou hast said it," "You say that I am," and "Thou sayest it" when replying to the questions of Caiphas and the Sanhedrin regarding His Messianic office (Matt. 26:64; Luke 22:70), and when replying to Pilate about His royal character (Matt. 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3). These words have sometimes wrongly been considered as an indirect negation, equivalent to: It is thou who sayest it, not I. Their affirmative sense is evident from a consideration of Mark 14:62, where Christ answers Caiphas categorically: "I am," and from the passage in St. John's Gospel (18:36) where the Savior positively acknowledges that He is a king, though in a wholly spiritual sense. The Talmud contains a few examples of this same expression (Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu,* p. 253). It is generally and rightly regarded as an affirmation pure and simple.

carnation, indicated here by the words, "Came I into the world." [520] Not for a moment during His life did our Lord cease carrying out this royal mission, speaking and acting as a vigorous witness of the truth. Those persons only are His true subjects who are themselves born, so to speak, of the truth and maintain a constant and close relation with it. Thus was it that Jesus openly proclaimed His kingly title before Pilate, as He had already proclaimed His Messianic title before the Sanhedrin. St. Paul praises this "good confession," as he calls it in his First Epistle to Timothy.[521]

"What is truth?" the procurator asked abruptly; and, without waiting for an answer, he left Christ and rejoined the members of the Sanhedrin outside the pretorium. His question had not been asked in earnest; it was the sally of a shallow politician without convictions, of a man who without any serious purpose utters a most important question and then suddenly breaks off the conversation and takes up other matters, having no time to concern himself with such abstract problems. He did not understand, and he scarcely troubled himself to understand, the mysterious words of the accused. He did, at any rate, know that such a king was hardly to be feared. More than once Jewish cut-throats, involved in uprisings, had been brought to his tribunal; but their appearance and manner were quite different from those of Christ. "In spite of the pitiful state to which Jesus was reduced, in spite of His emotions and weariness and ill-treatment, His natural distinction, the expression of His features, and His gentle, resigned look," [522] at the very first glance distinguished Him from ordinary disturbers of the peace.

Pilate said to the members of the Sanhedrin: "I find no cause in Him." [523] This was equivalent to the juridical expres-

[520] On their meaning, see John 9:39; 11:27; 16:28.
[521] See 1 Tim. 6:13.
[522] A. Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 374.
[523] Luke 23:4; John 18:38.

sion *"Non liquet,"* which Roman judges usually pronounced when the guilt of an accused person had not been proved. The chief priests and their colleagues of the Sanhedrin, understanding from these words of the governor that their prey was perhaps going to escape from them, loudly repeated [524] that particular accusation which they thought most capable of impressing a governor of Judea, ever at the mercy of revolt by the Jewish Zealots, those fanatical patriots who had no hesitation in adopting any means of opposition to Rome. The Sanhedrists said to Pilate: "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea,[525] beginning from Galilee to this place." The charge was absolutely false in the sense given it by the Savior's enemies; but it represented a semblance of truth, for, if we remove from it the political insinuation, it sums up Christ's public life fairly well. The general setting of that life had been made up of preaching, begun in Galilee and continued in Judea, in the midst of popular enthusiasm and of opposition on the part of the Pharisees. But the members of the Sanhedrin were careful to present it in a light that maliciously distorted it. According to them, Christ was a dangerous agitator, who stirred up the whole country.

Pilate felt no desire to verify the facts, because he began to perceive the trend of the plot which these violent accusers had formed against a man so clearly innocent. The governor was the more astonished at seeing that Jesus did not indignantly protest against such calumnies, but, on the contrary, observed a silence from which one might infer His guilt, thus seemingly acknowledged by Himself. Moved with pity, Pilate asked Him: "Answerest Thou nothing? Dost Thou not

[524] The Greek word *ἐπίσχυον* expresses this idea forcibly. Moreover, it is in the imperfect tense, expressing duration.

[525] It is possible that the word "Judea" here stands for the whole of Palestine, as in some other places of St. Luke's writings (Luke 1:5; 7:17; Acts 2:9; 10:37; 11:1, 29); but it may mean Judea in the stricter sense (Luke 2:4; Acts 1:8; 8:1).

hear how great testimonies they allege against Thee?" [526] A few words from our Lord would have been enough to reduce His enemies' accusations to nothing. But the procurator did not have the satisfaction of hearing Him pronounce those words; as the Evangelist adds, our Lord "answered him to never a word." [527] Pilate's astonishment increased. Why did he not act according to his conscience, which plainly told him that the accused had committed nothing reprehensible and it was the duty of an upright judge to set Him at liberty? But the ever bolder demands of the Sanhedrin intimidated him, and, as he did not dare oppose them openly, he resorted to a clever expedient to free himself from responsibility, as he thought.

Pilate was struck by the mention of Galilee as the starting-point of Christ's so-called revolutionary activities. He therefore asked whether the accused belonged to that province.[528] Upon learning that Jesus was indeed a Galilean and hence belonged to the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas, he ordered Him to be brought at once to the house of that ruler, who was then in Jerusalem for the Paschal festival. It is thought the tetrarch, when sojourning at Jerusalem, occupied the ancient palace of the Hasmonean princes, descendants of the Machabees.[529] That residence was located not far from the southwest corner of the Temple, on one side of the square of Xystos. To that spot, therefore, the Sanhedrin and their police brought our Lord.

The tetrarch immediately gave them an audience. Upon seeing Jesus, he did not hide his joy, for he had long been desirous [530] of beholding Him close at hand, because he had

[526] Matt. *27*: 14; Mark 15: 4.

[527] Matt. *27*: 14.

[528] We are indebted to St. Luke (*23*: 6–12) for this interesting episode of the Passion.

[529] Josephus, *Ant.*, XX, viii, 11; *Bell. Iud.*, III, xiv, 3; xvii, 6.

[530] Ἦν . . . θέλων (Vulg., *erat . . . cupiens*): a form of expression which indicates an eager and persistent desire.

heard many wonderful things about Him and hoped to persuade Him to perform some prodigy before his very eyes. St. Luke, in noting these details, alludes to the superstitious fear which, at an earlier date, had been stirred in Antipas' mind by the fame of Christ's miracles.[531] These psychological features, so well sketched by the Evangelist, give a life-like picture of this shallow prince, who expected, thanks to Jesus, to enjoy a new kind of amusement. He asked our Lord many questions on all sorts of subjects,[532] but none of them was serious. Jesus therefore again remained silent, in contrast with the conduct of the members of the Sanhedrin, who, in their relentless hatred, kept repeating to Herod their accusations against the Savior, as they had done before Pilate.[533] But their words were in vain, because Herod paid no attention to their calumnies. Yet, as his *amour propre* had been wounded, he indulged in a sorry vengeance toward Jesus. After ordering Him to be clothed in a white garment,[534] which simulated the royal dignity which He claimed, Herod and those of his courtiers, favorites, and guards who had come to Jerusalem with him, mocked the Savior. Following this gross parody, Herod sent Him back to Pilate, thus avoiding the assumption of any personal responsibility in the affair.

For some time past there had existed between these two wicked men a deep enmity, probably owing to some conflict of jurisdiction. But on that day a temporary reconciliation

[531] Matt. 14:1 f.; Mark 6:14–16; Luke 9:7–9.

[532] The Evangelist's language is very expressive: ἐπηρώτα ἐν λόγοις ἱκανοῖς (Vulg., *interrogabat multis sermonibus*).

[533] St. Luke calls our attention to this fact: "The chief priests and the Scribes stood by, earnestly accusing Him."

[534] In the Greek text, we read: ἐσθῆτα λαμπράν. Scholars are not agreed as to the meaning of the adjective λαμπράν, which the Vulgate translates *alba*, "white," but which etymologically designates resplendence rather than color. We know that at Rome and in Judea eminent personages dressed in white on formal occasions. Cf. Tacitus, *Hist.*, II, 89; Josephus, *Ant.*, VIII, vii, 3; XIX, viii, 2; *Bell. Iud.*, II, i, 2. Hence the Vulgate translation is not at all unlikely.

took place between them, as the tetrarch was flattered with the attention on Pilate's part in sending Jesus to his tribunal.

At this point begins the third and last phase of the Savior's civil trial. It is the most touching and the most tragic of all. The procurator must have been grievously disappointed when he saw that he had to shoulder the unwelcome burden of this delicate case, of which he thought he had cleverly rid himself. But he acted promptly, and at once made another attempt to rescue from death this condemned Prisoner, who was evidently innocent and in whom he became more and more interested. A large number of people, attracted by the arrest and condemnation of the Galilean Prophet, who but lately had been triumphantly brought by His followers into the Jewish metropolis as the Messias, had hastened to the place and crowded the approaches of the pretorium. The governor addressed the members of the Sanhedrin and this gathering of people, which was steadily growing in numbers. In a few well-chosen words he summed up the facts that proved the Prisoner's innocence. "You have presented unto me this man," he said, "as one that perverteth the people; and behold I, having examined Him before you, find no cause in this man, in those things wherein you accuse Him. No, nor Herod neither. For I sent you to him, and behold, nothing worthy of death is done to Him. I will chastise Him therefore, and release Him." [535]

The second part of this conclusion follows naturally from the premises, which required a verdict of acquittal. But how are we to understand the first part? Why "chastise" Jesus, since He is innocent? Why especially inflict upon Him the terrible penalty of scourging, here euphemistically called chastisement? In making this monstrous concession to the members of the Sanhedrin, Pilate thought he would be able to rescue the accused from death. The governor at the very first sus-

[535] This short address is to be found only in the Third Gospel: Luke 23: 14–16.

pected that Jesus was a victim of the hatred of the Jewish authorities. Of this fact he was now convinced, for no other explanation could be given of the new and curious zeal suddenly manifested by the Sanhedrin for the interests of Rome, to the detriment of a member of the Jewish nation. A most timely circumstance, by which Pilate profits in the hope of saving Christ, suggests to him an expedient which he thought would certainly succeed.[536]

On certain points the Romans showed themselves rather liberal with regard to the customs of peoples subject to their sway, on condition that their own authority did not suffer thereby. Thus it was they left to the Jews the enjoyment of an ancient custom by virtue of which they were able, at each Paschal festival, to demand the liberation of a prisoner and to choose which one should be thus favored. Probably this practice was established in early times in memory of the deliverance from the yoke of the Egyptians, which occurred at the time of the first Pasch.[537] The dense throng in front of the pretorium began loudly to demand the exercise of its customary right.[538] The governor was heartily in accord with them, because it seemed to him that here was an excellent means of attaining his own aim, by adroitly directing the people's choice.

In the Roman prison at Jerusalem there was then a famous prisoner who had committed murder during an uprising in Jerusalem and, along with other seditious Jews, had been arrested some time before. He was called Barabbas. This Ar-

[536] The next incident is related by all four Evangelists, though very briefly by St. John. Cf. Matt. 27:15–23; Mark 15:6–14; Luke 23:17–23; John 18:29 f.

[537] Some authors suppose that the right to this favor was granted to the Jews by the Romans after the conquest. But against this view are Pilate's words, as quoted by St. John, 18:39: "You have a custom that I should release one unto you . . ."

[538] It is not easy to determine whether the Jews or Pilate took the initiative in this matter. St. Mark and St. Luke seem to favor the former opinion; St. Matthew and St. John, the latter.

amaic name occurs frequently in the Talmud. As to its etymology, Hebraists do not agree; some give it the form Bar-abba, "son of the father," others give it the form Bar-rabban, "son of our doctor." Pilate felt sure of success by offering the clamorous rabble the option between Jesus and this murderer. "Whom will you that I release to you," he asked, "Barabbas, or Jesus that is called Christ?" A Christian soul shudders with grief at seeing Jesus, holiness itself, placed in the same class with Barabbas, whose hands were stained with human blood.

Pilate was then seated in the ivory arm-chair, called the curule, usually richly ornamented,[539] which was reserved for the highest Roman dignitaries when they were acting as judges and were about to pronounce an official sentence. He was awaiting the people's reply, when there occurred a remarkable incident which St. Matthew alone relates [540] in a few brief words. In early days there was a strict regulation forbidding Roman officials sent to the provinces of the Empire to take their wives with them. Tiberius repealed this law; but it was set down that officials would be held responsible for their wives' conduct, and especially for any intrigues they might enter into.[541] It is, therefore, not surprising that Claudia Procula, or Procla, as tradition calls her,[542] accompanied her husband to Judea, and even to Jerusalem.

She suddenly intervenes in the trial of Jesus by sending this urgent message to Pilate in open court: "Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him." This dream might have had a natural basis, for it is difficult to suppose that Claudia Procula had not heard of Jesus since she reached Jerusalem; it

[539] Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* pl. 71, fig. 9.
[540] Matt. 27: 19.
[541] Tacitus, *Annal.,* III, 33 f.
[542] Nicephorus, *Hist. Eccl.,* I, 30.

may even be that, before taking her sleep, she had learned of the happenings of the previous night. But, as the Fathers [543] and most Christian commentators suppose, upon that natural basis God placed a supernatural revelation, the echo of which we have just heard: by the mouth of this pagan woman, God renders an additional testimony to the innocence and holiness of His Christ.

As a summary of Christ's moral character, no epithet is more suitable than "that just man." The short message containing this expression shows in her who sent it not only a passing interest in our Lord, but a deeply religious soul rising above the narrow prejudices of paganism. Was Procla one of those Roman women, spoken of by Josephus,[544] who were attracted by the doctrinal and moral beauties of the Mosaic religion and became proselytes? [545] The apocryphal *Acta Pilati* declare that she was; [546] but that will hardly serve as authority for us. A tradition, at least as early as Origen,[547] goes farther than this and asserts that this Roman woman became a Christian after the Savior's death. At any rate, we cannot but admire her fine soul and her sympathy for the divine Victim, then so generally abandoned.

The intervention of Pilate's wife in Christ's behalf must have had no more influence upon his heart than did Judas' tardy testimony upon the minds of the chief priests. The latter were too hateful, too hard-hearted, and Pilate was too weak, to let themselves be influenced in a way to render full

[543] It is surprising to find several early doctors (as St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Philipp.*, V, Venerable Bede, St. Bernard) attributing this dream to the devil. Satan, they say, wished to hinder the work of Redemption from being fully accomplished, by arousing lively and powerful sympathy for Jesus.

[544] *Bell. Iud.*, II, xx, 2; cf. *Acts* 13:50.

[545] See Volume I, page 161.

[546] Thilo, *Codex Apocryph. Novi Testamenti*, p. 520; Brunet, *Les Évangiles Apocryphes*, 2d ed., pp. 234, 275.

[547] *Hom. in Matth.*, 35. The Greek menology even places Claudia Procula in the number of the saints.

justice to our Lord. Furthermore, while divine grace visibly acted upon Pilate through the intermediary of Claudia Procla that he might conduct himself as an impartial judge, the devil made use of the chief priests and the other members of the Sanhedrin to force the hand of the craven governor. Says St. Ambrose: *"Monebat uxor, lucebat in nocte gratia, divinitas eminebat, nec sic a sacrilega sententia temperavit."* [548] Christ's enemies, taking advantage of the interruption caused by Procula's message, circulated through the crowd, stirring up evil passions which influential men can so easily arouse in gatherings of that sort, uttering perfidious lies against Jesus and insinuations well calculated to make Him hated, openly declaring that the people must ask for Barabbas, whom they picture as a valiant defender of Jewish nationality against Roman despotism. Their success was as prompt as it was complete. When Pilate repeated his question, "Which of the two do you wish that I release unto you?" they all cried out with one voice, "Barabbas." Pilate was keenly disappointed upon seeing this second expedient fail. But he dissembled his vexation and, in the hope of being able to lead this multitude to better dispositions and even to have them ask for the Savior's release, now that they had received satisfaction in the matter of Barabbas, Pilate said: "What shall I do then with Jesus that is called Christ?" or, according to St. Mark, "What will you then that I do to the King of the Jews?"

Whichever form the question took, it was not a happy one under the circumstances. Presenting Jesus to this mob, already stirred up against Him, as their Christ and their King, was sure to increase their rage. The rank and file of the crowd, as also the members of the Great Council, shouted this barbarous [549] cry: "Let Him be crucified!" They demanded, not simply that Christ be put to death, but that He receive the

[548] *Expositio in Luc.*, Book X, 100.

[549] St. John uses the verb ἐκραύγασαν, which designates wild cries.

ignominious punishment of the cross. Origen compares this assembled populace to an uncaged wild beast.[550] They were quite responsive to the rallying cry of their leaders, and punctuated each of Pilate's questions with their murderous shouts. The religious chiefs had infected the mob with their own fanaticism.

"Why, what evil hath He done?" the governor asked again; "I find in Him nothing worthy of death." Still hoping to calm the mob, he repeats the iniquitous proposal that he had made a few moments before: "I will chastise [*i. e.*, scourge] Him therefore, and release Him." But with loud shouts they persist in demanding that Jesus be put to death on the cross. Their wild clamor became more intense, as the Synoptics explicitly indicate: "Crucify Him! Let Him be crucified!" Not many days later St. Peter takes the Jews to task for this criminal conduct, saying to them: "The God of our fathers hath glorified His Son Jesus, whom you indeed delivered up and denied before the face of Pilate, when he judged He should be released. But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you. But the Author of life you killed." [551]

Too late Pilate saw that, instead of obtaining any advantage by his cowardly proposals, he had made the crowd more violent and more difficult to satisfy. Does he at last perceive that nothing but a vigorous act of his authority can rescue from death Him whose innocence he has acknowledged and declared, and does he at length make an honorable stand? No. Resorting to a further expedient,[552] even more futile than the preceding, He orders a pitcher of water, a basin, and a towel brought to him. Then, after washing his hands in the

[550] *Homil. in Matth., h. l.*

[551] Acts 3: 14 f.

[552] This is another detail special to St. Matthew's Gospel (27: 24 f.).

presence of the multitude, he says aloud: "I am innocent of the blood of this just man; look you to it." [553] After this symbolic act,[554] by this new declaration of our Lord's innocence, by this protest intended to justify his personal conduct, he intended to discard his responsibility and completely free his conscience as a judge. In very truth, he did nothing less before God and before the judgment of history than commit a judicial murder upon the adorable person of our Lord and Savior. And by again so emphatically declaring the Savior's innocence, he still more conspicuously manifested the injustice of his own conduct.

With a feeling of well-merited indignation we may reply to Pilate: "For eighteen centuries there has existed a formulary in twelve articles which Christian lips pronounce every day. In that summary of our faith may be found, besides the adorable names of the three Divine Persons, the thrice blessed name of the woman who gave birth to the Son of God, and the thrice execrable name of the man who committed Him to death. And who is that man, thus marked with the stigma of deicide? It is neither Herod nor Caiphas nor Judas nor any of the Jewish or Roman executioners: that man is Pontius Pilate. And this is justice. Herod, Caiphas, Judas, and the rest had their part in the crime. But without Pilate nothing would have come of it. Pilate could have saved Christ, and without Pilate they could not have put Christ to death. Wash your hands, then, O Pilate. Declare yourself innocent of Christ's death. By way of reply we and likewise the remotest posterity will say daily: I believe in God the Father Almighty . . . and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was

[553] *I. e.,* This is your affair. The chief priests had answered Judas in a like manner. Cf. Matt. 27: 4.

[554] It has been said that this symbolic act was Jewish in origin, according to Deut. 21: 1–9; but the Romans also had *lustrationes expiatoriae.* Moreover, Pilate may have made use of this natural symbol spontaneously.

conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried." [555]

"When a judge, after having declared the innocence of the accused, actually rises from the judgment-seat, and by a symbolic act pronounces the execution of the accused a judicial murder, from all participation in which he wishes solemnly to clear himself, surely no jury would persist in demanding sentence of death." [556] But the Jewish mob that invaded the approaches of the pretorium had little care for justice and was at that very moment the prey to a fanatical excitation which made them ready to take upon themselves any responsibility. What a pagan judge did reluctantly, this heartless mob performed offhandedly. They were unanimous in crying out: "His blood be upon us and upon our children!" Among the ancient Jews, when judges pronounced a death sentence, by way of attesting their perfect impartiality in the trial, they raised their hands over the condemned person's head and said: "May thy blood be upon thy own head!" In the present case, on the contrary, the perverse rabble, violently demanding Christ's death, utters an abominable wish: they will not have long to wait before feeling its full weight.

The curse which they called down upon themselves and upon succeeding generations, was fully realized forty years later, when the Romans took Jerusalem, putting everything to fire and sword. So great a number of the inhabitants were crucified that, according to Josephus,[557] there was soon a lack of wood for the making of the crosses. It is difficult not to see

[555] Mgr. Pie, *Mandement du 12 février 1861*. We are far from wishing to depreciate the worth of these eloquent lines. But we should say that the insertion of Pilate's name in the Apostles' Creed was especially for the purpose of fixing the date of Christ's death.

[556] Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 576.

[557] *Bell. Iud.*, II, vi, 25.

in this horrible spectacle the punishment which the deicidal nation had thus called down upon itself.

Pilate, pretending to forego all further opposition, released Barabbas, as the Jews demanded. At the same time, in accord with the desire he had twice shown,[558] he turned Jesus over to his lictors to be scourged.

The Evangelists, still adhering to their method of simply and objectively recording the facts, the saddest as well as the most glorious, in the Savior's life, merely mention the name [559] of this extremely cruel and degrading punishment. Ancient writers, especially Cicero [560] and Philo,[561] furnish us with tragical descriptions of it; from them we take most of the following details.[562]

Among the Romans, scourging was inflicted, sometimes as a separate and integral punishment, sometimes as a prelude to crucifixion.[563] From the Gospel context we may suppose that the procurator intended it as another expedient for saving our Lord from death, by arousing the pity of the mob. Already, by a curious euphemism,[564] he had spoken of it as a light punishment, as a warning that would make the condemned person more careful in future.

When anyone was to be scourged, the upper part of his body was stripped bare, his hands were tied, and he was fastened to a low stake or pillar,[565] his back bent over in such wise that the strokes of the whip fell without any loss of force. The

[558] Luke 23:16, 22.

[559] Matt. 27:26; Mark 15:15; Luke 23:25; John 19:1.

[560] *In Verrem*, V.

[561] *Pro Flacco*, X.

[562] See also Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, X, 3; Suetonius, *Caligula*, 26; the *Acta Martyrum, passim;* Keim, *Geschichte Jesu von Nazara*, IV, 390 ff.

[563] Livy: *"Alios verberatos cruci affixit";* Justin, XXI, 4: *"Corpus verberibus lacerum in cruce figitur";* Lucian, *Pisc.*, 2; Josephus, *Bell. Iud.*, II, xiv, 9; St. Jerome, *Comment. in Matth., h. l.*

[564] Luke 23:16, παιδεύσας (Vulg., *emendatum*).

[565] In the Church of Saint Praxedes at Rome is venerated the column to which

lictors, usually two, sometimes four or six, strong men, accustomed to handling the "horrible whip," as Horace calls it,[566] struck pitilessly and with all their might. At the very first blows, the flesh was torn into shreds, and the blood gushed out in streams. The breast was lashed as well as the back by the terrible instrument of punishment; to make the whip still more cruel, pieces of bone, iron, or lead were sometimes fastened to the ends of the cords or thongs.[567] Among the Jews the number of lashes was strictly limited by the criminal law. But in Roman law there was no limitation of this sort, and the condemned person was therefore abandoned to the good pleasure, that is, the ferocity of the lictors. In some cases, the veins and the bowels of the victim were seen to be stripped bare after the scourging. Even the face was marked by blows. Many were carried off half-dead and quickly succumbed to the effects of the scourging.[568] There were instances when the scourgers, stopping from sheer weariness, found only a corpse before them.[569] There were several laws, as the *lex Porcia* and the *lex Sempronia*,[570] which forbade the infliction of this barbaric and ignominious punishment upon Roman citizens. It was reserved for slaves. But the people of the provinces subject to the Empire were not exempted. This is why Jesus was made to undergo it without any attenuation, like a common criminal, as He Himself had foretold: "He shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and shall be . . . scourged." [571]

it is said that our Lord was tied. It is mentioned as early as the year 333 (*Patrol. Lat.*, Vol. 8, col. 791). St. Jerome (*Epist.*, CVIII, 9) relates that it was pointed out to Saint Paula in the porch of the church of Sion. Cf. Rohault de Fleury, *Mémoire sur les Instruments de la Passion*, p. 266.

[566] *"Horribile flagellum"; Sat.*, I, iii, 119.

[567] Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 72, figs. 8, 9, 11.

[568] Cicero, *In Verrem*, V, 54: *"Pro mortuo sublatus brevi postea mortuus."*

[569] Livy, XXVIII, 16; Suetonius, *Caligula*, 26; Josephus, *Bell. Iud.*, VI, v.

[570] They date from the years 195 and 123 B. C.

[571] Luke 18:32. Cf. Matt. 20:19; Mark 10:34.

Other bloody outrages were inflicted on Christ before the horrors of the crucifixion. As the servants of the Sanhedrin had subjected Him to all manner of insults after His condemnation by that assembly, so did Pilate's soldiers make Him the sport of their cruelty and, with every refinement of brutal malice, employed a kind of torture calculated to afflict the soul as well as the body. As St. John Chrysostom says, it seems that all hell was let loose against the Son of God, to increase the number and painfulness of His sufferings. The sorrowful and touching scene of the crowning with thorns, fully described by St. Matthew and St. Mark, and briefly mentioned by St. John,[572] possessed a truly diabolical character.

Christ had declared that He was a king. The Roman soldiery would, therefore, amuse themselves at His expense, by paying Him mock honors of royalty. The entire cohort then on guard duty at the pretorium was gathered together.[573] After the scourging, the Savior's tunic had been put on Him. But it was now taken off and replaced by a "scarlet chlamys," [574] the mantle of one of the soldiers, its color representing the purple worn by kings. A few flexible shoots were taken from some thorny bushes, which are abundant in Palestine, and were hastily plaited into a crown. This they placed on our

[572] Matt. 27:27–30; Mark 15:16–19; John 19:2 f. St. Luke makes no mention of it.

[573] A legion at full strength contained 6,000 men; a cohort was one-tenth of a legion. Although St. Matthew and St. Mark speak of "the whole band" (*i.e.*, cohort), we need not take the expression literally; at least, the expression does not mean that all those who made up the cohort took an active part in the outrages. Many were simply onlookers.

[574] St. Matthew: χλαμύδα κοκκίνην. The chlamys was a cloak of coarse wool, dyed red (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, XXII, 2, 3), which Roman soldiers wore over their armor. Its shape was square or oblong. It was fastened at the left shoulder or beneath the chin by a buckle. See Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 2, fig. 7; Rohault de Fleury, *op. cit.*, pp. 202 ff. In St. Mark's and St. John's narrative we are told that the cloak was purple (πορφύραν). But this amounts to the same thing, as we see from the text of Horace (*Sat.*, II, vi, 102 f.), where the same garment is called "*vestis rubro cocco tincta*," and immediately afterwards is spoken of as "*purpurea vestis*."

Lord's head by way of diadem. We should like to know what sort of thorns was devoted to this cruel use. But on this point we are left to mere conjecture, since the Gospels tells us nothing specific about it. That sad honor may belong to the *Zizyphus,* or jujube, sometimes called the *Spina Christi* (Christ's thorn [575]), with long, sharply-pointed, curved thorns. A reed with a solid stem, like the Spanish and Cyprus rush, was placed in the Savior's right hand, to represent the royal scepter. After the "clothing" ceremony came that of investiture and of liege homage, likewise carried out as a mockery and a caricature of the practices employed on such occasions. Our Lord was made sit on a platform,[576] and the soldiers, one after the other, mockingly bent their knee before Him, saying: "Hail, King of the Jews." This was in imitation of the famous *"Ave Caesar, victor, imperator."* [577] They spit in His face, using this gross insult in place of the kiss of the Oriental ceremonial. Then they took the reed from His hand and struck Him violently on the head with it, so that the thorns penetrated the flesh; they also struck Him in the face. And our Lord endured all this with incomparable patience, uttering not a single complaint; He comforted Himself in offering His horrible sufferings to His heavenly Father for us.

Thus, within the pretorium was parodied the royal enthronement of the Messias. No one, not even Pilate, thought of rescuing the divine Prisoner from the soldiers' hands. As we learn from Tacitus, a frequent and atrocious custom of those times was to heap insults upon those who were to be executed.[578] Pilate thought the occasion opportune for making one more effort to arouse the compassion of the Jews by the frightful state to which our Lord had been reduced. In simple

[575] Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible,* p. 43; Fillion, *Atlas d'Histoire Naturelle de la Bible,* pl. 35, fig. 7; pl. 37, fig. 3.

[576] We have this detail from St. Justin, *Apol.,* I, 35.

[577] Macrobius, *Sat.,* II, iv, 29.

[578] *"Ut pereuntibus addita ludibria."* (*Annal.,* XV, 44.) See also Dio Cassius, IV.

and impressive language, St. John relates this scene of the *Ecce homo,* in which so many afflicted souls have found peace and comfort, so many sinners sincere repentance, so many artists lofty inspiration.[579] Jesus had been kept in the pretorium from the time the Sanhedrists turned Him over to the procurator. Pilate again comes out and says to the Jews: "Behold I bring Him forth unto you, that you may know I find no cause in Him." Thus repeatedly does he proclaim Christ's innocence, and still cherishes the vain hope of disarming the mob's hatred, by showing them to what a sad state the Savior had been reduced.

Christ then appeared before them, clothed in a red cloak and crowned with thorns, His face bleeding and disfigured by the blows of the whip and the soldiers' spittle. The governor presented Him to the agitated rabble, saying: "Behold the man." These were words of pity, intended to appeal to the feelings of compassion which must surely be aroused at the sight of such humiliations and sufferings. Our Lord's bitterest enemies must now, it would seem, be fully satisfied. But once again Pilate was mistaken. No sooner did the chief priests and the servants of the Sanhedrin see Jesus, than they began to egg on the mob, by loudly shouting their murderous cry: "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" "Take Him you and crucify Him," Pilate replied; "for I find no cause in Him." Even though saying this for the second time,[580] the governor well knew that, without his authorization, the Sanhedrists would not dare to carry out the death sentence which they had pronounced against the Savior. There was irony beneath this apparent concession. The Jewish leaders replied: "We have a law; and according to the law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." In fact, the Mosaic Law decreed the penalty of death for blasphemers; according to the

[579] John 19:4–7.
[580] Cf. John 18:31.

declaration of Christ's enemies, He had committed a crime of divine *lèse majesté,* by claiming the title of Son of God. The chief priests understood quite well that Pilate was granting them only an illusive right. To obtain his positive sanction, they suddenly utter this new charge. Hatred makes them clever: with the change of circumstances, they accuse their enemy of a political crime, then of a religious crime, and finally, as we shall presently see, return to a political charge. They here take the words "Son of God" in a strict sense, not as a synonym of Messias; they had already charged our Lord with calling Himself the "Christ-King," and evidently they are now pushing their point further.

Pilate was already much impressed by Christ's noble and dignified bearing; he is now still more impressed by this remark of the Sanhedrists,[581] which, of course, he interprets according to his pagan notions. If this condemned man, with His majestic bearing, is really the son of some divinity, what risks of terrible vengeance would not Pilate run, should he ratify the Sanhedrin's decree! He therefore, at once returns with Christ into the pretorium and questions Him again. "Whence art Thou?" he asks. The question is worded somewhat vaguely. It might mean: What country are you from? But Pilate hoped to obtain, from the information Christ would give as to His origin, some data about His real nature. Jesus, however, made no reply. Could this pagan have understood; would he have been willing to understand? Pilate is displeased at Christ's silence. Seeking to intimidate Him with the weight of his unlimited power, he says sternly: "Speakest Thou not to me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and I have power to release Thee?" With noble calmness the Divine Master shows Himself superior to this haughty judge, as He replies: "Thou shouldest not have any power against Me, unless it were given thee from

[581] John 19:8–11.

above. Therefore he that hath delivered Me to thee hath the greater sin." Pilate speaks of his absolute power; Jesus reminds him of his dependence and responsibility. Their rôles are interchanged, and the judge now becomes the accused. Although provided by the Emperor with all the powers that a mere mortal could use, what was a procurator of Judea relatively to God, to whom he would some day have to render an account of his conduct? And Jesus declares that Caiphas and the Sanhedrin had committed a "greater sin" than Pilate, in condemning Him to death—Him their Messias, and in bringing Him to the pretorium to have their criminal sentence ratified.

Upon hearing these words, the governor was more disturbed than ever. To quiet his conscience, he decided to make a supreme effort, more vigorous than the previous attempts, to save Jesus from death. From St. John we have the account of this last effort and its results.[582] Pilate tried[583] to parley again with the Sanhedrists. But the latter, who had seen his resistance weakening, redoubled their wiles to prevent their victim being released. "If thou release this man," they cried out[584] to the governor, "thou art not Caesar's friend. For whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Caesar." Christ had acknowledged that He was a king. But, to proclaim oneself a king in a kingdom already established and organized, is evidently to rise up against the reigning sovereign; it is the crime of *lèse majesté,* the mere suspicion of which aroused the wrath and "atrocious" vengeance of Tiberius.[585] The accusers knew what they were doing in using this manner of speech. They insinuated that if Pilate released their prisoner, he would be acting contrary to the interests of Tiberius, his

[582] John 19: 12–16.

[583] "He sought" is in the imperfect tense, denoting repeated and prolonged attempts.

[584] The best Greek manuscripts have ἐκραύγαζον.

[585] Tacitus, *Annal.*, III, 38; Suetonius, *Tiber.*, 58.

master and benefactor, and might perhaps lose the Emperor's favor.

The menace showing through these words did not escape the governor, who lived in ever present dread of offending the terrible Emperor, and who certainly would be unwilling to endanger his office merely to prevent the death of a Jew whom he hardly knew and for whom he felt nothing more than a passing interest. He made no reply to the declaration of the Sanhedrists, but ordered Jesus to be again brought forth from the pretorium and set Him before the crowd. Then he solemnly sat down upon the curule chair. Events now move rapidly. St. John gives us, in Greek and in Aramaic, the name of the place where the tribunal stood. In Greek it was called *Lithostrotos* ("place paved in mosaic"), in Aramaic, *Gabbatha* ("raised place"). We see, therefore, that the Hebrew word was not the equivalent of the Greek word, although designating the same place.[586] St. John also gives us the day and the precise hour when judgment was pronounced. It was, he says, the Friday [587] of the Paschal octave. As we have tried to show above, that year it was the 15th of Nisan, the great day of the Pasch. St. John adds that it was "about the sixth hour," *i. e.*, about noon. But how are we to reconcile this statement with a later text of St. Mark, which says, "It was the third hour, and they crucified Him"? [588] This would be nine o'clock in the morning according to our way of reckoning. As St. Augustine said,[589] this question presents a serious difficulty. Many solutions have been proposed, but none of them establishes a perfect agreement between the two accounts.[590]

[586] In that age, mosaics were very frequent in Greek and Roman houses of the rich. There were some also in the Temple courts, according to Josephus, *Ant.*, V, ii, 2; *Bell. Iud.*, VI, i, 8.

[587] On this meaning of παρασκεύη (Vulg., *parasceve*), see *supra*, p. 372.

[588] Mark 15:25.

[589] *Tractat. in Ioan.*, 19:14: "*Magna disceptatio solet oriri.*"

[590] See Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean*, p. 347, and other commentaries.

According to the different narratives of the trial begun early in the morning before Pilate, it is difficult to suppose that the judicial proceedings could have lasted more than three hours, including the interlude at Herod's palace. On the other hand, we should bear in mind that in questions of this sort the ancients, who had no clocks, could not determine the hour of the day as easily as we can; hence such expressions as "almost such an hour," and "about such or such an hour," which appear more than once in the sacred writings.[591] And it has been remarked that, in his indications of time, St. Mark is not always quite exact, so that in the present case we must split the difference in favor of St. John, though taking a reasonable point between the two, as suggested by the adverb "about," [592] and concluding that Pilate pronounced sentence upon our Lord somewhat before eleven o'clock.

When about to yield to the Jews' demand, the cowardly governor took a vain satisfaction in deriding them, by way of avenging himself. "Behold your King!" he said to them. This time his words are not an expression of pity, but of sarcasm. In an outburst of rage, they cried out: "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" With increasing irony he replied: "Shall I crucify your King?" The leaders of Israel, official spokesmen of the theocracy, did not hesitate to degrade themselves for ever by this hateful cry: "We have no king but Caesar." Rather than acknowledge Jesus as the Messias, they declared that the infamous Tiberius was their king. Thus did they deny the whole history and all the glorious privileges of their race, by proclaiming themselves subjects of the Roman Emperor, whom they really detested. To their base sacrilege corresponded that of Pilate, who then addressed to

[591] Matt. 20:3, 5, 6, 9; 27:46; Luke 23:44; John 1:39; 4:6; 19:14; Acts 5:7; 10:9; Apoc. 8:1.

[592] Schanz, *Commentar über das Evangelium des heiligen Johannes*, p. 553.

Jesus the official Latin formula of condemnation: *"Ibis in crucem,* Thou shalt go on the cross."

It is not by an inaccuracy that the Evangelists, alluding to the Jews who had obtained the ratification of their death decree, say that the procurator "delivered Him to them to be crucified," [593] or that "Jesus he delivered up to their will." [594] The sacred writers thus signify that, in this great judicial crime, the Jews had by far the larger part, that, as our Lord Himself said, they committed "the greater sin," although Pilate had been their sinister accomplice, who, like them, would not escape Heaven's vengeance. In fact, in the year 36, a few years after the Savior's death, he lost his position of honor and profit, for the sake of which and in spite of the demands of his conscience, he had sacrificed the blood of the holiest and most innocent of victims. Yet that wretched personage was soon regarded in a sympathetic way by Christian legend, which was thankful to him for having repeatedly and clearly proclaimed the Savior's innocence and for having made efforts to save His life. Hence, in the Gospel of Nicodemus,[595] he is spoken of as "uncircumcised in the flesh, but circumcised in heart," and the weighty Tertullian [596] even says that Pilate was *iam pro conscientia sua christianus.*[597]

IV. The Crucifixion

We now come to the tragic climax of the Passion and of the Savior's earthly life. The last time our Lord predicted this

[593] Matt. 27:26; Mark 15:15; John 19:16.

[594] Luke 23:25.

[595] Gospel of Nicodemus, 1:2.

[596] *Apol.,* XXI.

[597] For these often absurd legends, see the Gospel of Nicodemus, in Brunet, *Les Évangiles Apocryphes,* 2d ed., pp. 230–273, and in Hennecke, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen,* pp. 74–76, 143–145; Schürer, *Geschichte des jüd. Volkes,* 4th ed., I, 487–493; the fragments of the Gospel of Peter, in Preuschen, *Antilegomena,* pp. 13–18. Cf. W. Bauer, *Das Leben Jesu im Zeitalter der Apokryphen,* pp. 183–

bloody ending of His ministry, He declared, as the Gospel explicitly tells us,[598] that He would be crucified. Although the vision of the sufferings of the Messias, as set forth in the twenty-first Psalm,[599] and the fifty-third chapter of Isaias, does not mention this terrible gibbet by name, yet the Royal Psalmist indicates that Christ would die on a cross, for he places on the lips of the august Victim the words, "They have dug my hands and feet," thus evidently alluding to the crucifixion.

A deep mystery is contained in St. Paul's expression "Christ crucified," [600] crucified at the express demand of the leaders of His people. What an exceptional fact in the world's religious history! We shall better comprehend what is so striking and, at first glance, so strange in the association of these two words, when we have described this punishment of the cross, which was then quite justly considered as infamous and cruel. The cross, says St. Paul, is "unto the Jews indeed a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness." [601] According to Jewish ideas,[602] whoever died on the cross was not only forever dishonored, but was, from a religious standpoint, accursed. The members of the Sanhedrin, therefore, with their cruel tenacity triumphing over Pilate's weakness, were well aware of the significance of their cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" One must be guilty of a heinous crime to be condemned to such a death. Hence the holy Fathers were obliged to refute certain objections against Christ's divine mission and divine nature, objections which both Jews and

209. On the last events in the life of Pilate, which have likewise been the subject of legend, see the article "Pilate" in Vigouroux, *Dictionnaire de la Bible,* Vol. V, col. 433.

[598] Matt. 20:19. St. Mark and St. Luke use the general expression "They will put Him to death."

[599] Psalm 22 according to the Hebrew.

[600] See 1 Cor. 1:23.

[601] *Ibid.*

[602] Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13.

pagans based on the fact that He died on a cross. They said: "If He really was God and if He willed to die, why did He not choose an honorable form of death? Why did He particularly choose the cross, that ignominious form of punishment, which is unworthy of a free man, even if such a man were guilty?" [603]

Yet, in the eyes of faith, that cross, in itself so dishonorable, has had a notable part in winning for the Crucified One thousands upon thousands of disciples. The Savior, when referring to the manner of His death, had said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth [*i. e.,* raised on the cross], will draw all things to Myself." [604] That prophecy was promptly and entirely fulfilled. What seemed calculated to bring everlasting contempt upon Christ, procured a unique and eternal glory for Him. Instead of debasing Him, it has ennobled and idealized Him; it has drawn minds and hearts to Him. And so, immediately after Pentecost, the Apostles, far from being ashamed of having one crucified as their Master, frequently gave this title to Jesus, as the angel did at the sepulchre,[605] by way of a title of honor. In their preaching, instead of drawing a veil over whatever in His death was degrading in the eyes of men, they made it the very center of the new religion.[606]

Let us put aside these general considerations, however useful and interesting, and pass to the details which the Gospels furnish us about the death of Christ, which was both ignominious and glorious. As we wrote in another place, "the severe simplicity with which the four historians of Christ relate the touching scenes of His Passion, has often been admired. It is a guaranty of their impartiality. Their narratives would not be more matter-of-fact, if they were official reports by Pilate

[603] Lactantius, *Institut. Div.,* IV, 26; cf. Tertullian, *De Carne Christi,* V, 26.
[604] John 12:32.
[605] Matt. 28:5; Mark 16:6.
[606] Acts 2:36; 4:10; 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; 1 Cor. 1:18, 23; 2:2; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20; 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:24, etc.

or his subordinates. There is not found in them a single epithet intended to express or to arouse either indignation against the executioners or compassion for the Victim. . . . The sacred writers confine themselves to a statement of the facts. . . . They set forth the drama of Calvary just as they saw it or as they learned of it. Each succeeding generation beholds, through a clear and limpid medium, the image of the divine Crucified One, an image which is not veiled by any rhetoric of sentiment." [607]

The account is substantially the same in all four Evangelists. But as they habitually preserve their independence, each of them inserts some new details, so that they supplement one another and give us, with regard to Christ's last hours, if not all that piety would desire, at least all that the Holy Ghost judged useful for our instruction and edification. Their accounts are marked by moderation and calmness.[608] Since the frightful details of crucifixion, then so frequent, were but too familiar to most of their readers, the Evangelists merely sketch the chief events. But, thanks to the data obtainable from early Greek and Roman authors, both pagan and Christian, we can easily fill in the lacunae. Josephus also supplies valuable information.[609]

[607] Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Matthieu,* p. 546.

[608] How different from the apocryphal gospels, which add countless legendary details! See especially the Acts of Pilate and the fragments of the Gospel of Peter. Nestle, *Novi Testamenti Graeci Supplementum,* pp. 68–72; *Preuschen, Antilegomena,* pp. 114–118. See also W. Bauer, *Das Leben Jesu im Zeitalter der Apokryphen,* pp. 209–229; Hoffmann, *Das Leben Jesu nach den Apokryphen,* pp. 334–388.

[609] See also the Dictionaries of the Bible (Vigouroux', Hastings', Smith's, Kitto's, Riehm's) and of Archaeology (Daremberg and Saglio, F. X. Kraus, *Real-Encyklopädie der christlichen Alterthümer,* II, 224 f.), and special works: O. Zockler, *Das Kreuz Christi; religionshistorische und kirchlich-archäologische Untersuchungen;* Fulda, *Das Kreuz und die Kreuzigung, eine antiquarische Untersuchung;* Langen, *Die letzten Lebenstage Jesu,* pp. 294–326; Belser, *Die Geschichte des Leidens und Sterbens . . . des Herrn,* pp. 389–406 (Engl. tr. by Marks-Preuss); the Lives of Christ (*v. g.,* Keim, *Jesus von Nazara,* Vol. III, part

In the distressing though consoling scenes which make up the tragedy of the crucifixion, Christ appears to us singularly beautiful, perhaps more beautiful than in any other circumstances of His life. Without Calvary and the cross we should not have known fully the ideal beauty of His character.[610] This moral splendor is summed up in two principal traits: mildness and patience,[611] complete resignation to the will of His heavenly Father; and heroic strength of soul, capable of enduring the most violent tortures. During those agonizing hours, Jesus in every way realized the ideal of sacrifice, as no one before Him had ever done and as no one ever will do again.

In ancient times, especially among the Romans and the Jews, there was usually almost no interval between a judicial sentence and its execution.[612] After pronouncing sentence of death upon Christ, Pilate at once ordered the preparation of the cross, [613] unless one were in readiness, and of whatever was necessary for the crucifixion. The cross,[614] as an instrument of punishment, is of Oriental origin and was transmitted by the Persians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans to the Greeks, Carthaginians, Egyptians, and Romans.[615] In course of time it assumed various shapes. At first it was a simple stake, to which the condemned person was fastened or on

2, pp. 389–457, where numerous references will be found to the classical authors), and the extensive commentaries. We simply give the essentials.

[610] Landriot, *Le Christ de la Tradition*, II, 350.

[611] St. Cyprian, *De Bono Patient.*, 7: *"Plena et perfecta patientia."*

[612] Hence, among the Romans, the expressions *rapere ad supplicium, ad crucem* (Cicero, *Orat.*, II, 59; *In Verrem*, V). For the Jewish practice, cf. Josephus, *Ant.*, XX, iii, 1; *Bell. Iud.*, II, xiv, 9; IV, v, 4.

[613] Cicero, *In Verrem*, V, 62, cites these words: *"I, lictor, expedi crucem."*

[614] Its most usual Greek name was σταυρός. The English word "cross" comes from the Latin *crux*, which etymologically means "torment."

[615] The Jews never adopted it as a form of legal punishment. The cruel Herod the Great did not make use of it, notwithstanding the frightful example that had been previously given by the Hasmonean king, Alexander Janneus, who in one day had crucified eight hundred of his subjects at Jerusalem. Cf. Josephus, *Ant.*, XIII, xiv; *Bell. Iud.*, I, iv, 6.

which he was impaled.[616] Later a fork-like addition (*furca*) was fastened to the top of the stake, and from this the culprit was hanged by the neck. Then, by the addition of a transverse arm (*patibulum*), the cross assumed a new aspect. According to the way in which this arm was fastened to the original pillar, we have three kinds of crosses: the *crux decussata,* the *crux commissa,* and the *crux immissa.* The first, more commonly known as St. Andrew's cross, was in the form of an "X." The second, sometimes called St. Antony's cross, was like the letter "T." The third differed from the second only by the pillar of the cross extending slightly above the transverse arm. This is the form known as the Latin cross, with which we are all familiar.[617] It is almost certain that the Savior's cross was of this form; it is the one favored by a very early tradition.[618] In describing the cross of Christ the Fathers use certain comparisons—Moses praying with outstretched arms,[619] the Roman military standard,[620] the cardinal points of the compass,[621] a man swimming or a bird flying,[622] etc. But these can hardly apply to any form of cross except the *crux immissa.* Moreover, the inscription fastened above the head of Christ, would have given to a *crux commissa* the appearance of a Latin cross. Unfortunately iconography is of little help to us in this matter, because it was hardly earlier than the fifth century that representations of the cross began to appear on Christian monuments; and at first these crosses were without any image of the divine Victim, which began to appear on them only a century later.[623]

[616] Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* pl. 72, figs. 3, 12.

[617] Fillion, *op. cit.,* pl. 72, fig. 21.

[618] Cf. W. Bauer, *Das Leben Jesu im Zeitalter der Apokryphen,* p. 212.

[619] St. Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.,* 90. Cf. Minutius Felix, *Oct.,* XXIX. We shall later cite a text of St. Justin which settles the question.

[620] Tertullian, *Apol.,* XVI.

[621] St. Maximus of Turin, *De Cruce Domini,* hom. 3.

[622] St. Jerome, *Comment. in Marc.,* XI.

[623] Vigouroux, *Dictionnaire de la Bible,* Vol. II, col. 1132; Daremberg and

When all the preparations had been completed, the sorrowful procession set out. Following the usual practice, it was headed by "the centurion in charge of the execution," as Seneca styles him.[624] Following him came a herald, who proclaimed the reason for the condemnation. Next there advanced painfully, weakened from lack of sleep and food and by the scourging and other brutal treatment, the divine *Cruciarius*—the classical term applied to crucified persons—bearing His heavy cross.[625] The chlamys, which had been mockingly placed on His shoulders, was taken off, and His own garments had again been put on Him. He was surrounded by soldiers, ordinarily four in number,[626] who were to exercise the office of executioners and afterwards to act as guards at the cross, until His body would be taken down after His death. It may be that, as an extra precaution, a further detachment of the pretorian soldiers accompanied the procession to the place of execution. Ancient ecclesiastical writers, at the thought of Jesus carrying the instrument of His suffering,[627] recall Isaac, that other gentle and innocent victim, going up to Moriah, carrying the wood intended to consume his body after he had received the fatal blow.[628] Two robbers, perhaps two rioters

Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecques et Romaines*, Vol. I, part 2, col. 1575. The famous caricature of the crucifix, dating from the third century and discovered on the Palatine in Rome, represents the cross as surmounted by the customary inscription, which gives it quite the appearance of a *crux immissa*. (See Vigouroux, *Les Livres Saints et la Critique Rationaliste*, 5th ed., I, 99.)

[624] *De Ira*, I, 16; cf. Tacitus, *Annal.*, III, 14.

[625] This barbarous custom is mentioned by Artemidorus, *Oneirocrit.*, II, 56, and by Plutarch, *De Sera Numin. Vindicta*, 9. For a long time there have been most diverse opinions as to the kind of wood of which the cross was made. A scientific examination of several relics has shown that the wood came from a conifer, in fact a pine tree. See Vigouroux, *Le N. T. et les Découvertes Archéologiques*, 2d ed., p. 180; Rohault de Fleury, *Mémoire sur les Instruments de la Passion*, p. 63.

[626] Acts 12:4.

[627] Melito of Sardis, *Fragm.*, IX; Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, III, 18; *Adv. Iud.*, 10 and 13, etc.

[628] Gen. 22:6.

belonging to Barabbas' band, had been condemned to be crucified on the same day. They followed behind our Lord, also carrying their crosses and accompanied by their executioners. From all sides, in the narrow streets, thronged a noisy multitude, that heaped upon the *cruciarii,* especially upon Him who claimed to be the Messias, King of the Jews, insult and outrage of every sort.[629]

Usually among the Romans, and invariably among the Jews, executions took place outside the cities.[630] The place selected was generally near a frequented highway, so as to produce a greater impression. A difficult problem would be solved if we could find at Jerusalem the road followed by Christ and marked with His blood during His Passion. Unfortunately the traditions regarding the *Via Dolorosa* are not much earlier than modern times: the "stations" designated as such to-day were not definitively fixed upon until the Middle Ages. The only well-determined points are the pretorium, which certainly was located in the Antonia tower,[631] Calvary, and the sepulchre. All the rest is conjectural. The extensive and successive transformations undergone by the Holy City make it impossible to know exactly the route followed. The investigator becomes lost in a maze of modern buildings which prevent his determining the original route. But from the standpoint of faith, an approximation is quite sufficient.[632]

The general direction of the route is from east to west; its length is about 3,000 feet. Of the fourteen stations, only

[629] For the details which the Gospels give us of the preliminaries and the crucifixion itself, see Matt. 27:31–34; Mark 15:20–23; Luke 23:26–32; John 19:16 f.

[630] For the Jews, cf. Num. 15:35–37; 3 Kings 21:13; Acts 7:58. For the Romans, Cicero, *Pro Rabir.,* III, 10; Plautus, *Miles Glor.,* II, iv, 6.

[631] See the reservations made on this point, *supra,* p. 482.

[632] Rohault de Fleury, *Mémoire sur les Instruments de la Passion,* p. 280. On the *Via Crucis,* as it now exists at Jerusalem, and on its history, see de Piellat, *Voie de la Captivité et Chemin de la Croix à Jérusalem; La Palestine, Guide Historique et Pratique,* by Professors of Notre-Dame de France à Jérusalem, 2d ed., pp. 96–116; Thurston, S. J., *The Way of the Cross.*

the first nine are actually in the streets of Jerusalem; the other five are inside the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre. The part of the *Via Dolorosa* which goes rather steeply up to the Holy Sepulchre, is especially picturesque.

Just as the procession passed through the city gate, which led to the place selected for the execution of the three condemned persons, they met a Jew named Simon, who was coming from the country,[633] where his home may have been. The three Synoptics [634] add the epithet "Cyrenian" or "of Cyrene," because his birthplace was in Cyrenaica, a province on the northern coast of Africa, or perhaps in the city of Cyrene, its capital; [635] one-fourth of the population of that city were Jews.[636] Moreover, the Cyrenians at that time seem to have been rather numerous in Jerusalem, where they had a synagogue bearing their name.[637]

Simon appeared at the point mentioned. The soldiers at once laid hands on him [638] and, by the right of requisition which has always been exercised in the Orient, constrained [639] him to carry the Savior's cross the rest of the way. This they did, not from any feeling of pity for our Lord, for their souls had lost all feelings of compassion. But they saw He was so exhausted that they feared He would be unable to reach the place of execution unless He were relieved of the burden of

[633] St. Mark and St. Luke say ἀπ' ἀγροῦ (Vulg., *de villa*). This does not signify that he was returning from labor in the fields and that, consequently, that day could not have been the day of the Pasch.

[634] Matt. 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26.

[635] Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible,* pl. 17.

[636] Josephus, *Contra Apion.,* II, 4; *Ant.,* XIV, vii, 2. The Jewish historian informs us that Ptolemy Soter or Lagos (306–285 B. C.), the founder of the Egyptian kingdom after the death of Alexander the Great, had settled 100,000 Jews in that country and had granted them considerable privileges.

[637] Acts 6:9. The Acts of the Apostles (2:10) speaks of Jews of Cyrene who had come to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost.

[638] St. Luke: ἐπιλαβόμενοι (Vulg., *apprehenderunt*).

[639] St. Matthew and St. Mark use the verb ἀγγαρεύω (Vulg., *angariare*), which we have already seen in the sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5:41.

the cross. St. Mark uses an expression which, if taken literally, would indicate that the soldiers had to "carry" Jesus, or at least support Him during the latter part of the way.[640] On the other hand, the words of St. Luke, "they laid the cross on him to carry after Jesus," have been misunderstood by many painters and by some exegetes, as though they meant that the heavy burden remained upon the Savior's shoulders, and Simon merely lifted up the lower end of the vertical beam. The text in the other Synoptics leaves no room for doubt on this point.

We can understand Simon's repugnance in performing that humiliating task in spite of himself; but that is what has immortalized his name. It may well be that it brought him an even greater reward: St. Mark, adding for his Roman readers, that Simon was "the father of Alexander and of Rufus," seems to indicate that these two sons of the Cyrenian were Christians. And St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans,[641] addresses a special greeting to a distinguished Christian of Rome, named Rufus, who is generally considered to be one of these sons of Simon. If this identification is correct, as we may well suppose it to be, the Cyrenian was converted to Christianity together with his whole family.[642]

The place of execution was not far beyond the city walls, as they stood at that time. Jesus could be relieved of His cross. The chief purpose was attained, since He had the shame of passing through the crowded streets of Jerusalem bearing His infamous gibbet and of receiving countless insults, according to the barbarous custom of those times.[643] Thanks

[640] Φέρουσιν αὐτόν. But the verb φέρω often has the meaning "lead" or "conduct" (Vulg., *perducunt illum*).

[641] Rom. 16: 13.

[642] St. Paul, in the same passage, likewise greets Rufus' mother.

[643] "*Ita te forabunt patibulatum per viam stimulis*," Plautus says, with reference to this same subject, *Most.*, I, i, 53.

to St. Luke,[644] we are made acquainted with another incident of the "Via Crucis," which reveals feelings of genuine sympathy for the august Victim. The crowd that watched or followed the mournful procession was not made up merely of enemies of Christ and persons prompted by vulgar curiosity; it contained also a number of friendly persons, among whom, the Evangelist says, were inhabitants of Jerusalem—therefore distinct from the Galileans, with whom they have sometimes been wrongly confused—who did not hesitate to show their lively compassion for "the Man of sorrows" publicly by sobs and tears and by striking their breasts as a sign of grief.[645] A special decree forbade manifestations of this sort along the route of those condemned to death;[646] yet to these noble women the Savior was altogether different from an ordinary "cruciarius." Their presence and conduct showed that at Jerusalem, although the mass of the people was hostile or indifferent toward Him, some delicate souls had been won by His holiness, His preaching, His miracles, and His kindness.

Forgetful of His own sufferings, Christ turned to these compassionate women and said:

"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over Me; but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days shall come wherein they will say: Blessed are the barren and the wombs that have not borne and the paps that have not given suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us; and to the hills: Cover us. For if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?"

[644] Luke 23:27–31. It is noteworthy that this tender incident is found in the Third Gospel, which attributes a considerable part to women. Cf. Luke 1:39–56; 2:36–38; 7:11–15, 37–50; 8:1–3; 10:38–42; 11:27; 13:11–16, etc. "In the Gospels there is no instance of a woman being hostile to Christ." Plummer, *Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Luke*, p. 528.

[645] This is the meaning of ἐκόπτοντο (Vulg., *plangebant*).

[646] *Bab. Sanhedr.*, 42, 2: *"Non planxerunt eductum ad supplicium."*

By these words the Savior was not finding fault with their conduct, nor was He rejecting their sympathy. But, unmindful of His own sufferings, which soon would lead Him to glory, He foretold, as He had done in several of His recent discourses,[647] the evils that would fall upon them, either directly or in their children, when the deicidal city forty years later would suffer the most terrible fate before being destroyed by the Romans. On an earlier occasion, the Savior's mother was praised when it was said: "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, and the paps that gave Thee suck." [648] In the present instance we hear a very different beatitude, one that reverses the order of nature and is in opposition to the revealed word,[649] as also to the most sacred feelings of the Jews and other ancient races; [650] for it considers motherhood as a misfortune, because of the frightful anguish that mothers would feel on account of their children. The words "fall upon us, cover us," addressed to the hills and mountains, are taken from the prophecy of Osee,[651] where they represent a scene of horrible despair, of unbearable calamities which people wished to escape by a sudden death. St. John, in the Apocalypse,[652] puts these same words on the lips of the damned. Christ justifies His terrible threat by using a striking comparison. The green wood, with its leaves and blossoms and fruit, is Himself. The dry wood, cut long since and put aside for use as fuel, is guilty and unrepentant Israel. If Christ, despite His perfect holiness, undergoes such sufferings, what will be the lot of the Jews, whose malice cries to Heaven for vengeance? [653]

[647] Matt. 23:34–38; 24:4–22; Mark 13:5–20; Luke 21:8–24, etc.

[648] Luke 11:27.

[649] Cf. Osee 9:14, where it is regarded as a curse to be childless.

[650] Sterility was then generally considered an opprobrium. It will suffice to refer to Luke 1:25.

[651] Osee 10:8.

[652] Apoc. 6:16.

[653] A similar idea is expressed in Prov. 11:31; 1 Pet. 4:17 f.

It would seem that these words were the only ones that fell from our Lord's lips on His way to the place of the crucifixion. After uttering them, He resumed His majestic silence. The canonical Gospels mention no other incident regarding the *Via Dolorosa*. Is there any historical element in the accounts about Veronica, who with her veil is said to have wiped the Savior's face, stained with sweat, dust, and spittle, or in the account of the meeting of Jesus and His blessed mother? It is hard to say. A number of legendary details are found mingled with the accounts of the former of these incidents; in those of the latter, are several details unworthy of Mary. There are authors of weight who deny the truth of both incidents.[654]

After an agonizing journey the procession reached the place of execution. St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. John cite its name in Aramaic, the language then spoken in Palestine. It was called Golgotha, or more correctly *Gulgolta* (the equivalent of the Hebrew *gulgolet*), a word meaning "place of the skull," according to Matthew, Mark and John;[655] or, according to Luke,[656] simply "skull," a meaning which is more conformable to the etymology of the word. Calvary, as we call it in English, after the Latin translation, was not a hill, as frequently imagined, but simply a rocky knoll, a prominence most likely so named because its shape more or less vaguely recalled that of a human skull.[657] Contrary to St. Jerome's view,[658] there is no evidence that Golgotha was the regular

[654] For the former, see the writings entitled *Mors Pilati* and *Vindicta Salvatoris*, in Tischendorf, *Evangelia Apocrypha*, pp. 433 and 459; the *Acta Sanctorum* for February, c. III, pp. 451–455; Krauss, *Real-Encyclopädie der christl. Alterthümer*, II, 18. For the second incident, see the *Acta Pilati* B, 10 (Tischendorf, *l.c.*, pp. 282–284).

[655] Κρανίου τόπος (Vulg., *Calvariae locus*).

[656] Κρανίον.

[657] St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.*, XIII, 39. The Arabs give the name *"ras"* to mountain prominences that suggest to them the idea of "head."

[658] *Commentar. in Matt.*, 27. Venerable Bede likewise holds this view.

place of execution at Jerusalem, or that the skulls of executed persons were thrown there without burial—a practice the Jews would never have tolerated, as their religious ideas were absolutely opposed to any such thing. And, if such had been the case, the locality would have been called "the place of the skulls," not "of the skull." There is another opinion, mentioned by many of the Fathers,[659] that Golgotha was so named because Adam was buried there. St. Jerome [660] rightly classes this tradition among the legends. With his customary vigor he says: "It tickles the ear; but it is not true." Evidently the tradition owes its origin to the Christian notion of having the second Adam die at the spot where the progenitor of the human race was buried. From this legend sprang the practice of placing a skull and crossbones beneath the crucifix.

The Evangelists are explicit in stating that Golgotha was located outside Jerusalem,[661] though not far from the walls. The sites of our Lord's death and burial are to-day venerated within the city limits.[662] But a rampart built by Agrippa I a few years after the Passion [663] took in Calvary and a considerable part of the environs of the Holy City, towards the northwest. About the middle of the nineteenth century, certain Protestant Palestinologists,[664] on the basis of topographical data, denied the authenticity of the traditional Golgotha. But their contention was refuted by undeniable proofs from the

[659] *V.g.*, Origen, *Homil. in Matth.*, 27:35; St. Basil, *In Isaiam*, chap. 5; St. Athanasius, *Sermo de Cruce et Passione;* Nonnus, *Paraphras. in Evang. Joannis*, XIX, 89–90; St. Ambrose, *Exposit. in Luc.*, X, 114, to whom this view is quite acceptable. See Langen, *Die letzten Lebenstage Jesu*, p. 369.

[660] *Loc. cit.*

[661] Matt. 27:32; cf. 28:11; John 19:20; Heb. 13:12.

[662] Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible*, plates 14 and 15.

[663] Josephus, *Bell. Iud.*, V, iv, 2.

[664] *E.g.*, an American theologian, Robinson (*Palästina und die südlich angrenzenden Länder*, II, 268–275), an English author, Fergusson (*An Essay on the Ancient Topography of Jerusalem*), and a Swiss physician, Titus Tobler (*Golgotha, seine Kirchen und Klöster*).

ranks of Protestantism as well as by Catholic scholars.[665] This is not the place for entering upon the details of that discussion, which, in fact, is still going on. Suffice it to say that, in the words of the most competent scholars, "the authenticity of Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre has the best warrant of certitude that can be hoped for in such a matter," and that "its archaeological security" is complete,[666] so that the Christian may confidently prostrate himself in this majestic sanctuary, as in the basilica at Bethlehem, to venerate the most sacred mysteries of the Incarnate Word in the very places where they took place.

By virtue of an ancient custom, tolerated by the Romans and mentioned in the Talmud,[667] among the Jews a person condemned to death was offered, just when his punishment was about to start, a cup filled with strong wine, in which a little myrrh and incense had been mixed. The ancients were fond of this mixture on account of its pronounced aromatic flavor.[668] They also regarded it as a powerful narcotic,[669] and this was the reason for the practice which we have just mentioned. The custom was also based on a Biblical text, interpreted in a broad sense. The Book of Proverbs says: "Give strong drink to them that are sad; and wine to them that are grieved in mind. Let them drink and forget their want, and remember their sorrow no more." [670] In Jerusalem, the women of the upper classes of society had the privilege of preparing this drink,[671] which St. Mark, with his usual

[665] See an excellent summary of these proofs in Langen, *Die letzen Lebenstage Jesu*, pp. 363–412; and de Vogüé, *Les Églises de la Terre Sainte*, pp. 118–232; Sir Wilson, *Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre;* Clermont-Ganneau, *L'Authenticité du Saint Sépulcre*, and the remarkable work by Fathers Vincent and Abel, *Jérusalem, Recherches de Topographie, d'Archéologie et d'Histoire*, II, 89–300.

[666] Vincent and Abel, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

[667] *Bab. Sanhedr.*, 48, 2.

[668] Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, XIV, 15.

[669] Dioscorides, I, 77.

[670] Prov. 31:6 f.

[671] Lightfoot, *Horae Talmud. in Matth.* 27:34.

exactness, calls "wine mingled with myrrh." [672] St. Matthew's expression in this same connection has given some difficulty to interpreters; for he speaks of "wine mingled with gall." [673] If we were to take this text literally, there would be no question of something offered the Savior to alleviate His sufferings, but rather a new outrage in addition to so many others. Among the Greeks, however, the word generally used to designate gall stood also for bitter substances, to which myrrh belongs.[674] The account in the First Gospel, therefore, amounts to the same thing as St. Mark's.

When this drink was offered to Christ, He merely touched it with His parched lips, but refused to drink. We can understand the reason that prompted His refusal. He who was about to redeem the world by His sufferings, willed to endure the final agony without the slightest alleviation, looking death in the face, in full possession of His whole being. The chalice of bitterness which His heavenly Father presented to Him, He would drink to its last drop, as He had long since pledged Himself to do.

"They crucified Him"—this is all the four Evangelists [675] say about the horrible execution, in which human cruelty had contrived to delay death as long as possible, while adding torture to torture. We have already given a description of the cross. We must now describe the Savior's crucifixion by gathering the data to be found scattered here and there in ancient authors.[676]

[672] Mark 15:23: Ἐσμυρνισμένον οἶνον (Vulg., *myrrhatum vinum*).

[673] Matt. 27:34: οἶνον μετὰ χολῆς μεμιγμένον (Vulg., *vinum cum felle mistum*). Various Greek manuscripts have ὄξος ("vinegar") instead of οἶνον. But this must be a faulty reading, coming from Ps. 68:22 (Heb. 69:22), where we read: "They gave me gall for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

[674] Preuschen, *Griechisch-deutsches Handwörterbuch zu den Schriften des N. T.*, p. 1158.

[675] Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:33; John 19:18.

[676] We should remark, in passing, that masterpieces of art, representing our Lord's Crucifixion, often contain details that are erroneous from the archeological standpoint.

The condemned person was first stripped of all his garments. *Nudi crucifiguntur* was the general rule.[677] This practice was carried out in our Lord's case and in that of the other *cruciarii*. But we may well suppose that, on this point also, the Jewish custom was followed, as mentioned in the Talmud,[678] namely, that a linen cloth was fastened about the loins of the victim. It is quite likely that the members of the Sanhedrin who were present and exerted some control over the details, required that Jewish proprieties should not be offended.[679]

Then came the crucifixion itself. Generally the crosses were not very high, hardly twice the height of a man. The crucified body was so near to the ground that wild beasts could devour it.[680] At the middle of the upright post was fastened a wooden peg, which projected like a "horn"—the name sometimes given to it.[681] Upon this the condemned man was hoisted by means of ropes or leather thongs.[682] This support was needed to hold up the body of the crucified person; otherwise the hands would soon tear loose and the crucified body would fall to the ground.[683] On our crucifixes we often see a little block beneath the Savior's feet, like a footstool. This would have

[677] Artemidorus, *Oneirocrit.*, II, 58.

[678] *Bab. Sanhedr.*, VI, 5.

[679] The Gospel of Nicodemus (chap. 10) supposes the existence of this cloth. Brunet, *Les Évangiles Apocryphes*, 2d ed., p. 243.

[680] Suetonius, *Nero*, 49. In another place (*Galba*, 9) the same author speaks of a very high cross, but as an exceptional instance.

[681] The Latins called it also *sedile*, "seat."

[682] St. Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 91; St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, II, 42, and Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, III, 18, mention it explicitly. St. Justin's text deserves particular mention, because it clearly shows that, according to this holy Doctor, who was a native of Palestine and lived in the first half of the second century (103–168), the Savior's cross was really the Latin cross. He says: "It is a straight piece of wood, its upper end rising like a horn, when another beam is fastened to it; on each side, two other horns, forming the extremities, appear joined to the first. In the middle is placed a projection, also resembling a horn, and intended to be a sort of seat for the crucified."

[683] Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, XXVIII, 4; Lucan, VI, 543, 547. Hence the expression *cruci inequitare*.

served the same purpose; but it is not probable that it existed on the cross of Jesus, as the earliest writers make no mention of it.

There were two methods of crucifixion. Sometimes the cross was laid on the ground, and the condemned person was fastened to it by the executioners; then it was raised and made firm.[684] But this method was not the usual one. Generally the cross was first securely fixed in the ground; the condemned man was then raised on the wooden peg, as explained above, and his hands and feet were fastened to the cross by large nails;[685] his hands to the transverse beam, and his feet to the vertical pillar.

It has sometimes been supposed that the Savior's feet were not nailed, but simply fastened to the cross with a rope. Against this supposition is the unanimous testimony of tradition,[686] which regarded the crucifixion of Christ as the fulfillment of the famous prophecy: "They have dug my hands and feet": [687] and it is refuted in the Gospels themselves by these words of St. Luke: [688] "See My hands and feet, that it is I Myself; handle and see. . . . And when He said this, He showed them His hands and feet." [689] Was there a single

[684] Seneca, *Epist.*, 101; Tertullian, *Adv. Nation.*, I, 12.

[685] "At the Church of Notre Dame at Paris, there is preserved a nail of the Passion, 90 millimeters (3½ inches) long. . . . At Rome, in the Church of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem, may be seen another nail, which is 12 centimeters (4⅘ inches) long and 8 millimeters (⅓ inch) in diameter at its thickest part. . . . The cathedral of Treves has a nail of like shape, which is said to have been given to the bishop of that city by Saint Helena." (Vigouroux, *Le Nouveau Testament et les Découvertes Archéologiques Modernes*, 2d ed., p. 182.) Cf. Kraus, *Der heilige Nagel zu Trier*, pp. 105–173; Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 71.

[686] Cf. W. Bauer, *Das Leben Jesu*, p. 216. Of the earliest Fathers, we mention especially St. Justin (*Dial. cum Tryph.*, 97, 98, 104, and *Apol.*, I, 35) and Tertullian (*Adv. Marc.*, III, 19, and IV, 42).

[687] Ps. 21:17 (Heb. 22:17).

[688] Luke 24:39 f.

[689] The following text of Plautus (*Mostell.*, II, i, 13) most clearly shows that the ancient practice was to nail the feet as well as the hands of the crucified:

nail for the two feet, or a separate nail for each foot? This is a disputed question. Most probably each foot was nailed to the cross separately. St. Cyprian, who had witnessed many crucifixions, speaks of the nails (in the plural) that pierced the feet.[690] St. Ambrose,[691] St. Augustine,[692] Rufinus,[693] Theodoret,[694] and others explicitly mention the four nails that were used to crucify our Lord. Moreover, it would have been much more difficult to fasten both feet with a single nail.

It is also questioned whether Jesus was crucified with the crown of thorns upon His head, as He is usually represented in art. Early writers who consider this question, answer in the affirmative: for example, Origen,[695] the Sibylline Oracles,[696] and the Gospel of Nicodemus.[697] It was natural that the Romans should crucify "the King of the Jews" with this mocking emblem of His royalty; it would have been an added cruelty; but those executioners hardly concerned themselves about it.

What words can tell all the sufferings our Lord had to endure on the cross for six long hours, if we take St. Mark's chronological indication [698] literally, or at least for three hours according to St. John? We have already spoken of the ignominious character of death on a cross, a form of punishment which, in the Roman Empire, was inflicted only on slaves [699]

"Ego dabo ei talentum, primus qui in crucem excurrerit; sed ea lege ut affigantur bis pedes bis brachia." In this instance, the extraordinary circumstance is that each member is pierced by two nails.

690 *Sermo de Passione.*

691 *De Obitu Theodos.*, 47 and 49.

692 *Tractat. in Joan.*, XXXVI, 4.

693 *Hist. Eccl.*, II, 8.

694 *Hist. Eccl.*, I, 17.

695 *Hom. in Matth., h.l.;* cf. Tertullian, *Adv. Iud.*, XIII.

696 *Sibylline Oracles*, I, 372 f.

697 Chapter 10 (Brunet, *op. cit.*).

698 See *supra*, page 514.

699 For this reason it was called: *servile supplicium* (Cicero, *Philipp.*, I, 2).

and the worst sort of criminals. But crucifixion was even more painfully atrocious than it was degrading. Cicero does not exaggerate when he calls it *"teterrimum crudelissimumque supplicium."* [700] And Bossuet is right in saying that "of all deaths it is the most inhuman" and that, therefore, Christ passed the last hours of His life "amid incredible pains." [701] The physical suffering felt when the nails—"the bitter sharp-pointed nails," says St. Melito of Sardis [702]—were driven into delicate and sensitive members, kept growing more painful. That suffering soon became veritable torture, by the weight of the body hanging on four gaping wounds, by the forced immobility of the body, by a burning fever that soon made itself felt, by the thirst which that fever produced, by convulsions and spasms, and also (a detail that is not negligible in the Orient) by the myriads of flies that were attracted by the blood and the wounds. However, since no vital organ of the body was wounded—although all the members were wrenched and, as it were, shattered by that horrible suspension—the crucified one might live for a day, nay, for two days or even longer, before being released by death.[703]

And what words can describe our Lord's moral suffering during that frightful agony? He seems, in a sense, "to have been raised aloft on that infamous wood only to perceive at a greater distance a multitude of people feasting their eyes upon the sight of His wretchedness." [704] We shall witness the insults heaped upon Him to His very last moments, and we shall hear Him declaring His unutterable anguish, when He feels Himself forsaken by His heavenly Father. The very sight of His blessed mother and devoted friends, who were

[700] *In Verrem*, V, 64.

[701] Sermon for the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, *Œuvres*, Versailles ed., XIV, 331, 341.

[702] *Fragm.*, 16.

[703] Seneca, *Epist.* 101; Petronius, *Sat.*, III, 6; Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, VIII, 8.

[704] Bossuet, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

plunged into the deepest grief at beholding His suffering, was a further torment to Him. Thus everything was a source of agony for Him, in His body, mind, heart, and soul. Upon that cross, so abominable that the Romans had taken pains to exempt from it whoever bore the title of *civis romanus,* He was dying drop by drop, as it were, tortured, yet comforted by the thought that He was fulfilling the will of God and procuring our salvation.

While the nails were being driven into those hands which had been so lavish of blessings and acts of kindness, the gentle Victim broke His silence for the first time since reaching Golgotha. He spoke, not in complaint, but to ask God's forgiveness for His executioners: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." "Mankind has counted the words that came from the lips of the crucified Savior. They are seven in number, impressed with an infinite loftiness, force, and tenderness. These seven words close the public life of Christ as the eight beatitudes opened it, by the revelation of a greatness that is not of this earth. But in this case there is something more beautiful, more distressful, more poignant, more divine." [705] St. Matthew and St. Mark record only one of these words.[706] St. Luke cites three; St. John also three.[707] The first three words were spoken at the beginning of the crucifixion; the four others shortly before the Savior's death. Thus they form two series, one concerning Christ's relations with men and the world, the other, His relations with God. The manner of their utterance shows a superhuman dignity in the *Christus patiens.* About Him is hate and violence, bent upon insult and torture; in Him is a divine patience, a heavenly majesty, a confidence that is not disturbed for a single instant.

"Father, forgive them." This generous pardon, and the no

[705] Bougaud, *Jésus-Christ,* 2d ed., p. 548.
[706] Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34.
[707] Luke 23:34, 43, 46; John 19:26–28, 30.

less generous excuse accompanying it,[708] applied not only to the Roman soldiers who were then as unwitting instruments filling the office of executioners, but to all of our Lord's enemies, particularly the Jews, who were the direct cause of His cruel death. Their ignorance was very culpable, for they could easily have recognized the divine character of Christ's mission, if they had not let their hatred mislead them. But to a certain extent it did attenuate their guilt, and this is what St. Peter and St. Paul say later on.[709] Amid His sufferings, the Savior thus forgets Himself and thinks of the sinners whose faults He is expiating.

The soldiers, after performing their task, divided the Victim's garments,[710] which the law awarded to them.[711] There were four soldiers; consequently they made four divisions of the garments, perhaps the cloak, the head-dress, the cincture, and the sandals; and as these parts were of unequal value, each one's share was determined by lot. St. John gives us particular information about the tunic, which was the principal garment. It was seamless, made of one piece of cloth from top to bottom. Probably it was the work of Mary's maternal hands or a gift from one of the holy women. To divide it would have been to destroy it, yet none of the soldiers would give up his right to it. Hence, they said to one another: "Let us not cut it, but let us cast lots for it, whose it shall be." This they did at once. St. John regards this fact as the fulfilment of a passage in the twenty-first Psalm.[712] This whole

[708] This first word of Christ on the cross is not found in several Greek manuscripts or the Sinaitic Syriac or Coptic versions or many manuscripts of the Itala; but it is contained in the great mass of the other early documents. Tatian inserted it in his *Diatessaron,* and St. Irenaeus cites it. Its authenticity is admitted by several Rationalist critics who are the hardest to convince in such cases (Pfleiderer, O. Holtzmann, W. Bauer, etc.).

[709] Acts 3:17; 13:27; cf. 1 Tim. 1:13.

[710] Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:23 f. St. John's account is the most complete.

[711] Keim, *Geschichte Jesu,* III, 421.

[712] Ps. 22:19, of the Hebrew Bible. According to the Vulgate and various Greek

Psalm relates to the Messias, describing His Passion and crucifixion in detail. The text is quoted literally by the Evangelist, according to the Septuagint translation: "They have parted my garments among them; and upon my vesture they have cast lot." Having concluded the division of the garments, the executioners sat at the foot of the cross to guard it. Classical authors [713] mention this custom of setting guards at a crucifixion. Its purpose was to prevent relatives or friends of the executed person from removing him from the cross and thus attempting to save his life.[714] As we remarked above, crucifixion did not produce death immediately, because the flow of blood was soon stopped by the swelling of the members that had been pierced by the nails; thus death might be delayed many hours.

The four Gospels call our attention to another characteristic incident.[715] It was customary to fasten at the top of the cross a strip of wood, on which was painted (in black or red) the reason for the condemnation.[716] Pilate himself, as supreme judge, had composed the inscription for the Savior's cross. It was in three languages: in Latin, the official language of the Roman government; in Greek and in Hebrew (more correctly Aramaic), the tongues usually spoken in Palestine. The wording of this inscription varies slightly in the four accounts, and perhaps it varied also in the three languages in

manuscripts, St. Matthew (*27*: 35) also quotes this prophecy; but the citation is generally considered apocryphal, because it is not found in the best ancient codices of the first Gospel.

[713] Petronius, *Sat.*, III, 6; Plutarch, *Vita Cleom.*, 38.

[714] Josephus (*Vita*, 75) relates that the life of one of his friends was saved by his being rescued in this way. Two others died as a result of their crucifixion.

[715] Matt. *27*: 37; Mark 15: 26; Luke *23*: 38; John 19: 19–22. St. John's narrative contains some interesting details peculiar to him.

[716] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 10; Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, V, 2. The technical name of this inscription was *titulus* (whence the Greek work τίτλος, used by St. John). It was sometimes suspended from the neck of the condemned person, when he was being led to the place of execution (Suetonius, *Caligula*, 32). See Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 71, fig. 11.

which it was written. St. John records it in the most complete form: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." [717] It indicates the name of the condemned, His home city, and His supposed crime. The words "King of the Jews" are contained in all the accounts. They were, in fact, the principal words. Divine Providence willed that the Messianic kingship be proclaimed as a glorious title, even upon the ignominious instrument of His execution, that it be proclaimed in the languages of the three most famous civilized nations of that time.

Since Golgotha was situated near the city and on a frequented highway, many Jews were able to read the inscription, and they were shocked to see the title of king of their nation thus publicly and officially attributed to a crucified man. More than anyone else, the members of the Sanhedrin felt the humiliation, especially after the incidents at the pretorium. They hastily sent a delegation to Pilate, to suggest that he alter the text of the inscription in a way to make it acceptable to everyone. "Write not: the King of the Jews," they asked; "but that He said: I am the King of the Jews." Thus amended, the inscription would have had quite a different meaning. This time the governor remained firm and contemptuously replied: "What I have written, I have written." These haughty Jews had been eager to have Jesus condemned as a claimant to royalty; and Pilate wished it to be known that He was crucified by reason of that claim. His purpose was attained, since he intended to humiliate the Sanhedrists and take his revenge on them by giving this form to the inscription.

Along with Christ were crucified two "thieves," as they are commonly called, following our Latin translation; but according to the full force of the Greek text, they were veritable bandits,[718] seditious brigands, like Barabbas. Palestine was

[717] St. Matthew: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews"; St. Mark: "The King of the Jews"; St. Luke: "This is the King of the Jews."

[718] Λησταί. The *latrones* of the Vulgate corresponds rather to the Greek

then infested with robbers.[719] The crosses of the two condemned bandits were erected at either side of the Savior's cross, as though to do honor to "the King of the Jews"; in reality, by way of added mockery. God permitted it to be so done, says St. Mark, in order to fulfil a detail of Isaias' prophecy regarding the Passion of the Messias: "And with the wicked He was reputed." [720]

Twice after the death sentence was pronounced against our Lord, at Caiphas' house and in the pretorium, servants and soldiers had insulted Him. Insults followed Him even on the cross, and people belonging to diverse classes of society—the multitude of the curious-minded and of passers-by, the Sanhedrin, the soldiers, and the two thieves—one after another took part in this cruel pastime, in this outburst of fanatical passion.[721] The heartless multitude, as it ordinarily does in like cases, set the example by gross insults. St. Luke tells us that they "stood beholding," taking cruel pleasure in this sight which always attracts their curiosity. The passers-by were numerous, for, as usual,[722] the crucifixion took place at a frequented point; they shook their heads by way of contempt and said: "Ah! [723] Thou that destroyest the Temple of God, and in three days dost rebuilt it. Save Thy own self. If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." If Jesus was powerful enough to destroy the gigantic buildings of the Temple and to raise them up again in three days, if He was the

κλέπται, "thieves." St. Luke uses the noun κακοῦργοι, "evil-doers," or "malefactors." Cf. Matt. 27:38; Mark 15:27 f.; Luke 23:33; John 19:18.

[719] Josephus, *Ant.* XVI, x, 8; XX, viii, to; *Bell. Iud.*, II, xii–xiii.

[720] Is. 53:12. But it is not certain that St. Mark really quoted this text; many important Greek manuscripts do not contain it. But Christ applied it to Himself according to Luke 22:37. (Cf. Acts 8:32 f.)

[721] Matt. 27:39–44; Mark 15:29–32; Luke 23:35–39.

[722] Tacitus, *Annal.*, I, 32; Lucian, *De Morte Peregr.*, 34; Seneca, *De Ira*, I, 16; Joseph, *Ant.*, IV, viii, 24; XX, vi, 3.

[723] In the Greek: οὐά (Vulg., *vah*); it is an interjection which here expresses a feeling of sarcastic admiration. (Cf. Epictetus, III, 23 f.)

Son of God, the Messias, as He claimed to be, it would be easy for Him to descend miraculously from His cross, in spite of the nails fastening Him to it.

A second class of insulters was made up of members of the Sanhedrin who had come for the pleasure of gazing upon the suffering and humiliation of their victim. The Evangelists report their sarcastic remarks, too. The jests of the crowd were addressed directly to our Lord. The Sanhedrists, being well-bred, speak about Him in the third person; but their insults did not thereby become the less poignant: "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him now deliver Him if He will have Him; for He said: I am the Son of God." Sarcasm could not be more bitter, nor mockery more sacrilegious. Yet even in their mocking, these cruel men gave testimony to the reality of the miracles of Him whom they were insulting. Would they really have believed Him if they saw Him descend from the cross, as they here challenge Him? St. Jerome answers this question in the negative. The Savior's eloquent preaching, His countless miracles, and His perfect holiness had not succeeded in converting those men so obdurate in their unbelief; even His Resurrection leaves them unmoved. Perhaps they would have attributed the miracle which they so insolently required to Beelzebub or to magic, and their feelings of hatred would have increased in bitterness. Yet we are happy to read in the Acts of the Apostles [724] that, after our Lord's Ascension, "a great multitude also of the [Jewish] priests obeyed the faith."

Following the example of the Jewish authorities, the soldiers on guard at the cross also insulted the Savior, saying: "If Thou be the King of the Jews, save Thyself." Then, coming

[724] Acts 6:7.

close to our Lord, they offered Him in a cup the mixture of water and vinegar (in Latin, *posca*[725]), which at that time was the usual drink of the Roman soldiers.

The two robbers, crucified beside the Savior, mingled their voices in these insults.[726] Both of them were Jews, and they repeat after the people and the chief priests: "If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us." But at this point Christ suddenly finds an unexpected defender, no other than one of those bandits, the one whom popular speech designates as "the good thief." In the midst of that fanatical multitude stirred up against Christ, he alone dared to raise his voice in touching apology of the Savior. First addressing the other robber, he said: "Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done no evil."[727] It is as though he said: In a few hours we shall appear before God and shall have to answer for many crimes. Do you not fear to offend Him still more at this last hour, since you insult this innocent man? Coming from such lips, praise of this sort has great force. To the practiced eye of the criminal a short time was enough to recognize the holiness of his companion in misfortune, whose noble calmness and resignation he admired. Turning to the Savior, he begged a

[725] Plautus, *Miles Glor.*, III, ii, 25; *Trucul.*, II, vii, 48. Among the ancient Jews it was the drink of farm laborers. (See Ruth 2:14.)

[726] St. Matthew and St. Mark say so explicitly. According to St. Luke's narrative, only one of the bandits took part in the insults. Origen, St. Jerome, St. John Chrysostom, and others, in their commentaries on this passage, establish a harmony among the Gospel accounts, by saying that at first the two thieves insulted our Lord, but soon one of them became better disposed. We hold to this same view. In agreement with St. Augustine (*De Consensu Evangel.*, III, 16) and other interpreters, it may be said that St. Matthew and St. Mark generalize, because it is their purpose to relate only a part of the scene. To St. Luke we owe the tender episode of the good thief. (Cf. Matt. 27:44; Mark 15:32; Luke 23:39–43.)

[727] According to the Greek: οὐδὲν ἄτοπον. Literally, nothing unbecoming; *a fortiori*, nothing worthy of death.

favor of Him, in accents of lively faith: "Lord,[728] remember me, when Thou shalt come as King." [729] To speak thus was explicitly to proclaim belief in Jesus' Messianic dignity. In fact, the kingdom to which he alludes is the one which, according to the Jews and also the Gospel, is to be established by the Messias. The good thief's act of faith is especially remarkable when we consider the circumstances in which Christ then was. But, as St. Augustine says,[730] the cross was a perfect school for him; and by what a Master he was taught!

Jesus had maintained a noble silence in the face of the blasphemies directed against Him from all sides. But He deigned to make a most gentle answer to the penitent thief's prayer: "Amen I say to thee, this day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." He granted far more to the suppliant than he had asked; He promised him, not merely a place in His future kingdom, at the time of His second coming, but to bring him that very day into "paradise," that is, into the place of rest where the souls of the just were gathered while waiting for the Messias to come and lead them into Heaven.[731] This is the second word of the dying Christ. It breathes an incomparable serenity and confidence. Blessed was he on whose behalf it was spoken, since it so promptly granted eternal salvation to his tardy repentance.[732]

[728] Important manuscripts and several ancient versions have Ἰησοῦ instead of κύριε.

[729] This is the real meaning of the Greek text, where we read: ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου, in the dative case (*in regno tuo,* and not *in regnum tuum,* as the Vulgate translates it). Hence there is no question directly of Heaven, but of Christ's return to earth for the founding of His kingdom. (Cf. Matt. 25:31.)

[730] *Sermo 234, 2.*

[731] The word "paradise" is of Persian origin. Its first meaning was: a pleasure garden or park. It is in this sense that the Septuagint uses it in the translation of Gen. 2:8, 15, and 3:23, to designate the earthly paradise, the *gan Eden* of the Hebrew Bible. Starting from that, the Jews little by little came to give this name to the place where the souls of the just abode while awaiting the happiness of Heaven.

[732] The *bonus latro* has the honor of being inscribed in the catalogue of the Saints (in the Roman Martyrology, March 25). For the legendary details as to

The third word, which is made up of two portions, belongs to a most touching scene, described with delicacy and simplicity by the beloved disciple, who, with the Savior's blessed mother, was its central figure.[733] That broken-hearted but courageous mother was standing near the cross of her Divine Son. No fear, no obstacle had been able to keep her from Him at that supreme hour. With her were her sister, also called Mary, the wife of Cleophas and mother of the Apostles James the Less and Jude, Mary Magdalen, and St. John.[734] The devout penitent of Magdala could hardly be wanting at this scene of generous and noble compassion. The Synoptics mention also Salome and some other holy women, as being in this loving and desolated group.[735]

Christ's blessed mother was then suffering all the anguish which the aged Simeon had foretold thirty-three years earlier.[736] But she dismissed her own grief and thought only of the sufferings of her Son. Jesus felt and shared the inmost sufferings that pierced Mary's soul like a sharp-pointed sword. What a painful blow it was for Him when He saw her not far from the cross, and what grief there was in the tender look with which they regarded each other! But from her very grief He brings forth a consolation for her. He saw standing beside her the Apostle of His special predilection. Desiring to give her a final consolation before dying, and to soften the bitter affliction of the rest of her life, He said to her:

the names and antecedents of the two thieves, see Brunet, *Les Évangiles Apocryphes,* 2d ed., pp. 77, 78, 102, 243; Hofmann, *Leben Jesu nach den Apokryphen,* pp. 176–179; Tischendorf, *Evangelia Apocrypha,* pp. 339, 341. There is great diversity as to their names; the most frequent are Dismas for the good thief, said to be the one crucified at the Savior's right, and Gestas for the bad thief.

[733] John 19:25–27.

[734] Many exegetes suppose that the Blessed Virgin's sister and the wife of Cleophas were two different persons. We consider it more in conformity with the Gospel text and with tradition to identify them. See the commentators.

[735] Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40.

[736] Luke 2:34 f.

"Woman,[737] behold thy son." Then, turning His look upon the disciple, He said to him: "Behold thy mother." For Mary, this exchange was unspeakably sad. Who could take her Son's place with her? The principal advantage was for John, to whom the Savior, before breathing His last, gave so great a mark of affection, by entrusting that incomparable treasure to him.[738] At any rate, Mary would not be alone after the death of her Son. This fact is noted by the Evangelist when he says, by anticipation, that after Christ had breathed His last, John brought Mary "to his home," [739] very probably to the house which he owned or occupied in Jerusalem. Tradition pictures him at her side as long as she lived, comforting her by his attentions.[740]

From this impressive picture, we pass to the descriptions which the sacred writers devote to the Redeemer's last moments. They first mention a remarkable phenomenon which occurred about the sixth hour, that is about noon, soon after our Lord was placed on the cross. From that time, they say,[741] until the ninth hour (three o'clock in the afternoon), consequently until the very moment of the Savior's last breath, the sun was obscured, and darkness enveloped not only the

[737] On the use of this expression, see Volume II, pages 84 ff.

[738] Bossuet develops these thoughts in his Panegyric on St. John, part 2 (*Œuvres,* Versailles ed., XVI, 564–572). Masters of the spiritual life, when commenting on these words of Christ, often say that St. John then represented all Christians, who thus at Calvary became Mary's children in a mystical way.

[739] Εἰς τὰ ἴδια (Vulg., *in sua*).

[740] Tradition is not in agreement as to certain important points of the Blessed Virgin's life after the Passion. According to St. Epiphanius (*Haer.,* LXXVIII, 11; cf. Nicephorus, *Hist. Eccl.,* II, 3), she lived with St. John at Jerusalem for eleven years and died a holy death in that city, where her tomb is venerated not far from the Garden of Gethsemani (Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible,* pl. 15). We are told, on the contrary, in the synodal letter of the Council of Ephesus, that she died at the age of seventy-two, at Ephesus, whither she had followed St. John. Cf. Labbé, *Histoire des Conciles,* III, 573.

[741] Matt. *27*: 45; Mark 15: 33; Luke *23*: 44 f.

deicidal city, but "the whole earth," probably a hyperbolic expression in this passage, designating, as it does in other passages of Holy Writ, "the whole country," *i. e.*, Judea,[742] or all Palestine, and possibly part of the neighboring districts. This darkness did not proceed from an eclipse, as Origen said in the second century,[743] inasmuch as the moon was then full. It was a providential event, a real miracle, by which nature itself seemed to put on mourning when the Son of God was about to die on the cross. Men showed themselves merciless towards Him; but the inanimate world testified its sympathy and, in its own way, protested against the greatest crime that had ever been perpetrated on earth.[744]

A little before three o'clock, Jesus in a loud voice uttered the words which St. Matthew and St. Mark[745] put down in Aramaic: *"Eli, Eli"* (or according to the Galilean pronunciation, recorded by St. Mark, *"Eloi, Eloi"*) *"lamma sabacthani?"* "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" It was a cry of distress and unutterable anguish, its words being taken by Christ from the twenty-first Psalm, which, as Tertullian[746] and the Fathers of the Church remark, contains "the whole Passion of the Messias." But how are we to explain the existence of such an abyss of sorrow in the soul of Christ, that at the very moment when He was heroically sacrificing Himself to fulfil His Father's will, He could say that He was forsaken by Him? Beyond a doubt, we have here a profound mystery, because it is difficult for our mind to reconcile this frightful anguish with the bliss that must necessarily have

[742] This was the opinion of Origen, *Comment. in Matth., h. l.* The apocryphal Gospel of Peter makes a like restriction.

[743] See Victor of Capua, *De Cycl. Pasch.*, in the *Spicilegium Solesmense*, I, 297, and the Gospel of Nicodemus, XI.

[744] Arnobius, *Adv. Nat.*, I, 53; Pseudo-Clement, *Recognit.*, I, 41; St. Jerome, *Comment. in h. l.* Cf. W. Bauer, *Das Leben Jesu*, pp. 327–329.

[745] Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34.

[746] *Adv. Marc.*, III, 19.

reigned in the heart of the God-man. Yet this sense of abandonment, in this case even more than at Gethsemani, shows to what a point He had taken our nature with all its infirmities.

But God did not forsake Him. If Christ speaks of abandonment, it is under the impression of a passing disturbance, which seized upon Him amid so many moral and physical sufferings, and under the crushing weight of the sins of all mankind, which He had taken upon Himself. His cry is, indeed, harrowing. But it is not, as some have repeated after the pagan Celsus and Julian the Apostate, the cry of one in despair. On the contrary, it is wholly resigned, since it is a call upon God, the call of a submissive Son who, though groaning in His desolation, accepts His Father's will and asks only the "why" of such great suffering. That feeling of anguish, expressed in the fourth word of the dying Christ, was, however, of short duration, for He at once recovered His composure and uttered a most perfect *Fiat* from the depths of His soul.

This word of Christ was followed by an incident that at first may have been simply the result of a misunderstanding of what He said, but quickly became malicious.[747] Several of those present—probably Jews, for the soldiers did not understand Aramaic and hardly knew about the prophet Elias—said to one another: "Behold He calleth Elias." They supposed that Christ was calling to His aid the celebrated prophet, to whom the Jews have always attributed extraordinary power to succor them in times of misfortune. It was a common opinion that Elias was to play an important part in the history of the Messias.[748]

At almost the same time Jesus spoke His fifth word, the shortest of all, but expressing one of the most unbearable sufferings of those crucified: "I thirst." St. John, who alone

[747] Matt. 27:47 f.; Mark 15:35 f.
[748] Matt. 17:10 f.; Mark 9:10 f.; Luke 1:17.

cites this word, introduces it with a solemn expression: "Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said: I thirst." [749] This word was, therefore, more than a mere plaint, wrested from Him by a burning fever. The Savior thereby purposed directly the fulfilment of the ancient prophecies, which had spoken of thirst as an integral part of the Messias' sufferings: "My tongue hath cleaved to my jaws; [750] in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." [751] One of the bystanders, out of pity, taking a sponge which was near at hand and which the soldiers may have used to wash their hands after the crucifixion, wet it in the mixture of vinegar and water already mentioned. He then fastened the sponge to a branch of hyssop [752] and moistened the Savior's parched lips. The others tried to stop him, saying with cruel sarcasm: "Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to deliver Him."

When our Lord had tasted the drink, He said: "All is fulfilled." [753] This was His sixth word on the cross. It was an expression of perfect obedience and sums up the Savior's whole work, foretold by the prophecies and figures of the Old Testament, and adequately fulfilled by Him from His entrance into the world until the last moment of His earthly life. It is also an expression of holy joy and glorious triumph, since it proclaims many victories. Now Christ could die in peace and go to rest in the bosom of God.

The seventh and last word followed closely upon the sixth.[754] It is taken from the Psalms: "Father, into Thy hands I com-

[749] John 19:28 f.

[750] Ps. 21:16 (Heb. 22:16).

[751] Ps. 68:22 (Heb. 69:22).

[752] St. Matthew and St. Mark speak vaguely of a reed; St. John is more exact. The hyssop belongs to the family of the *Labiatae*, genus *Origanum*. Cf. Fillion, *Atlas d'Histoire Naturelle de la Bible*, pl. 21, fig. 7. The stem is rarely longer than 20 inches. But that would suffice, since the cross was not high.

[753] John 19:30. In the Greek: τετέλεσται (Vulg., *consummatum est*).

[754] Luke 23:46.

mend My spirit." [755] This is full confidence and filial affection. Immediately upon uttering this word, the Savior gave a loud cry, thus indicating that He was still full of life and strength. Then He bowed His head and, in full exercise of His will, as befitted the Messias, Son of God, breathed His last.[756] It was three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour when the evening sacrifice was offered in the Temple.

All four Gospels, by special expressions, indicate the free and spontaneous character of Christ's death. None of them uses the ordinary phrase, "He died," but they all have recourse to special forms of expression, to show that He "yielded" or "gave up the ghost" to His Father by a sovereign act of His will. On an earlier occasion He had said, speaking of His life: "No man taketh it away from Me; but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down; and I have power to take it up again." [757] It was under these conditions that He gently breathed forth His soul, instead of dying from exhaustion, as did others who were crucified.

The evening sacrifice, which we mentioned above, consisted in the immolation of a lamb without blemish. But what was that sacrifice, with its accompanying solemnity,[758] when compared with the sacrifice of our true paschal Lamb [759] immolated upon the altar of the cross? This was a sacrifice of infinite value, as was the Victim there offered, the more so as the Pontiff by whom it was consecrated was none other than the God-man Himself,[760] a priest according to the order of Melchisedech, priest and victim together, following the beautiful expression, *Sacerdos suae victimae, Victima sui sacerdotii.* And so this sacrifice was offered once for all, replacing

[755] Ps. 30:6 (Heb. 31:6).
[756] Matt. 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30.
[757] John 10:18.
[758] See Volume I, pages 244–246.
[759] See 1 Cor. 5:7.
[760] Eph. 5:2.

all others, which were eliminated by it, as darkness flees before the light, and the figure before the reality.[761] It is, therefore, impossible to conceive a more perfect sacrifice, combining all that is most pleasing to God, and causing to descend from Heaven to earth all the blessings which the earth needs.

The purpose and significance of this immolation of the Savior on the cross were not doubtful, because Christ Himself had plainly indicated them on various solemn occasions. His death on the cross was a work of redemption and reconciliation. He died and sacrificed Himself on that infamous tree only to expiate the sins of men and to ward off from them the eternal punishment which they had merited by offending the God of holiness and justice. He made Himself the substitute for guilty humanity, He was the innocent and perfect Victim of infinite price, since He was God, receiving in humanity's place the blows of divine justice. Hence the expression, *satisfactio vicaria,* given by theologians to this wonderful intervention. "The Son of Man is come . . . to give His life a redemption for many." [762] "This is My blood of the new testament, which shall be shed unto the remission of sins." [763] The Savior's words suffice to prove this glorious and consoling thesis, which was that of Isaias when he predicted the Passion of the Messias. And it was the thesis of the Apostles and doctors of the Church, and remains one of the sublimest and most beautiful dogmas of Catholic faith.[764]

Thus did the cross, that cruel and ignominious instrument of torture, become a glory, not only for Christ Himself, but also for Christianity, its natural and characteristic symbol, since, as St. Paul says,[765] the Savior blotted out the decree

[761] These ideas are magnificently developed in the Epistle to the Hebrews; see especially chapters 9 and 10.

[762] Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45.

[763] Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24.

[764] Council of Trent, Sess. VI, cap. 7.

[765] Col. 2:14.

of condemnation which God had issued against us by fastening it to the cross. [766]

V. After Christ's Death

The four Gospels devote almost as much space to the events following the crucifixion as they do to the Passion. They first relate some remarkable testimonies given to the divine Victim immediately after His death, by nature and by men; then they show us with what holy zeal certain of His disciples went about His burial.

The testimony of nature consisted in several phenomena which the sacred writers evidently consider miraculous. The first of these is recounted by all the Synoptics: "Behold the veil of the Temple was rent in two from the top even to the bottom." [767] From the Talmud [768] we know that two veils or hangings closed the entrance of the *naos* or sanctuary strictly so called. One hung before the Holy Place, separating it from the vestibule; the other was before the Holy of Holies.[769] Both of them were very thick, made partly of purple and gold, and were covered almost entirely with embroidered cherubim. Such hangings could be torn in two from top to bottom by nothing less than a miracle. The Evangelists do not say which of these veils was rent. But we may reasonably suppose it was the one nearest the entrance to the Holy of Holies, since that was *the* veil *par excellence,* and since St. Matthew and St Mark employ the most usual Greek name in designating the veil here in question.[770] God thus indictated that, thanks to the redemptive death of the Messias, all men could thence-

[766] See *infra,* Appendix XII.

[767] Matt. 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45.

[768] *Yoma,* V, 1; *Shekalim,* VIII, 5.

[769] Ex. 26:31–37; Lev. 16:23; Heb. 9:3; Philo, *Vita Moys.,* III, 6; Edersheim, *The Temple and its Services,* p. 35, and *Life and Times of Jesus,* II, 609.

[770] Καταπέτασμα, not καλύμμα.

forth freely approach Him, whereas, under the Old Law, only the High Priest, and that but once a year at the feast of Expiation, had a right to enter for a few moments within the innermost portion of the Jewish sanctuary.[771] Under the New Covenant every barrier of this sort is suppressed; each of us can appproach God directly, sure of being received with mercy.

This was a grave warning for the Jews. It is remarkable that, outside the Gospels, three distinct documents, independent of one another, relate that about this time the Temple was the scene of a catastrophe which cast terror into the Jewish nation. In the apocryphal Gospel of the Hebrews it was related, as preserved for us by St. Jerome,[772] that the very large and solid stone lintel to which the veil of the Temple was fastened, broke and fell into pieces. And Josephus [773] tells of the eastern gate of the Temple opening of itself one night—an event that was looked upon as a threatening prodigy. The Talmud [774] mentions the same occurrence and fixes its date at about forty years before the destruction of the Temple, which would roughly coincide with the time of the Savior's death. May not these three traditions be a more or less distorted memory of the miracle that took place in the Temple at Christ's death?

Other miraculous phenomena followed. At Jerusalem the earth quaked, as though seized with convulsive movements and, like the firmament, wishing to show its horror at the crime of deicide. This earthquake had two effects: rocks split open, and many of the tombs, that were cut out of the rock in the environs of the city, opened. St. Matthew, after relating these details,[775] says that "many bodies of the saints that had

[771] Lev. 16: 1–34; Heb. 10: 19–22.
[772] *Comment. in Matth.*, 27: 51; *Epist.*, 149, *Ad Hedib.*, 8.
[773] *Bell. Iud.*, VI, v, 2–4. Cf. St. Jerome, *Epist.*, CXX, 7.
[774] *Bab. Joma*, 39. See also Tacitus, *Hist.*, V, 13.
[775] Matt. 27: 51–53.

slept [that is, who had been dead some time] arose." And by anticipation, to complete the account of the miracle, he adds that these saints, coming out of their tombs after our Lord's Resurrection,[776] entered the Holy City and appeared to many persons, attesting that Christ had truly come back to life.[777]

Even paganism furnished undeniable witnesses to the Savior on that day.[778] The Roman centurion, who was in charge of the triple crucifixion, and the soldiers under him, had beheld and heard close at hand all the extraordinary happenings in the Savior's last moments and following His death, and they felt a religious fright. After witnessing the signs of the supernatural power of Him whom they had just put to death, they no doubt asked one another whether they were not about to fall under the blows of His vengeance. The centurion had been deeply impressed by this whole tragedy. He who had witnessed numerous crucifixions, quickly grasped that Jesus, far from being a common criminal, was much more than an ordinary man. His unalterable patience, His prayer for His executioners, His other words, His whole attitude on the cross, had surprised and then edified the centurion. The Savior's loud cry before drawing His last breath especially impressed him; for he knew that usually crucified men died of exhaustion, whereas Christ was still full of vigor at the moment of His death.[779] The centurion summed up his

[776] They did not rise from the dead before Him; what would they have done in their graves while awaiting the hour of their appearance? Probably they belonged to the contemporary generation, since they were readily recognized by a large number of their fellow-countrymen.

[777] Was their resurrection only temporary? Or was it final, so that the Savior may have led them to Heaven with Him on the day of His Ascension? This is a much disputed question, which it is impossible to solve. See Knabenbauer, *Comment. in Evang. Matth.*, 2d ed., II, 546; Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Matth.*, p. 555.

[778] Matt. 27:54; Mark 15:39; Luke 23:47.

[779] It is to be noted, however, that in the Second Gospel, which alone mentions this detail, the reading ὅτι οὕτως κράξας ἐξέπνευσεν (Vulg., *quia sic clamans expirasset*) is not altogether certain, since the participle κράξας (*clamans*) is omitted by several manuscripts. If this word is not authentic, the Evangelist means to designate the Savior's whole attitude on the cross.

feelings when he exclaimed: "Indeed this man was a son of God." [780] There is scarcely any doubt but that he interpreted this title of "Son of God" in the broad sense it must have had on the lips of a pagan. St. Luke gives a quite general translation of it: "Indeed this was a just man." In any event, the centurion had remarked something superhuman in Christ, and he said so in his own way. There was a tradition, which St. John Chrysostom cites without guaranteeing its authenticity, to the effect that the centurion soon afterwards accepted the Christian faith and died a martyr.

Other witnesses of the events at Calvary showed a keen emotion. They were a number of Jews, who went away striking their breast and, by this act of grief, showing the sorrow they felt at Jesus' death.[781]

The Synoptics [782] point out a third group, whose grief was much keener and deeper, because it was more loving. This was a group of holy women, friends of the Savior, especially those Galilean women who had so often accompanied Him on His missionary journeys and ministered to His needs.[783] Among the latter, special mention is made of Mary Magdalen; Mary, the mother of James the Less, and of Joseph; Salome, the mother of James the Greater and of John. We have seen that their presence brought consolation to the Master in His last moments. Even after His death, they remained there, where they had been drawn by their holy affection. Nor did they withdraw until the last duties were paid to His sacred remains. They exhibited "that firm constancy in affection of which women are more capable than men in disconsolate circumstances." [784] From St. Luke we learn that, standing by the cross, there were, besides the holy women, "all His

[780] In the Greek: Θεοῦ *υἱός*, without the article.
[781] Luke 23:48.
[782] Matt. 27:55 f.; Mark 15:40 f.; Luke 23:49.
[783] Luke 8:1–3.
[784] A. Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 403.

acquaintance." [785] Evidently the expression is hyperbolic; but it seems to designate some of the intimate friends and disciples of the Savior, perhaps Lazarus of Bethania and his sisters, who, like St. John, had hastened to Calvary to give Him a last proof of their love. What were now the sentiments of all these? Their faith was unsettled, their hopes were dimmed; but at least their love still glowed. As to the Blessed Virgin Mary, she was there, inconsolable, but sure that her Son would rise again as He had foretold; she gave to all an example of valor and constancy.

The Sabbath was approaching. In accordance with the ancient regulation, it began at sunset. And this was a particularly solemn Sabbath, because it fell within the Paschal octave. For this reason the members of the Sanhedrin, who had used so much haste in obtaining Jesus' crucifixion, were in a hurry to remove His body and the bodies of the two thieves.

It was the Roman custom to leave the bodies of those crucified for a considerable time on the cross. Often the corpses became putrefied, or wild beasts and birds of prey tore them to pieces. Seldom were they given to the family. The Mosaic Law, on the contrary, forbade that the corpse of one executed be left on the gibbet for the night.[786] To leave it there, would have been to profane the entire Holy Land and to draw down divine malediction thereon.

Before our Lord expired, the chief priests and other members of the Sanhedrin sent to Pilate a request that he would order to be inflicted upon the three crucified ones of Golgotha what was called in Latin *crurifragium*,[787] which consisted in breaking the sufferers' legs with a club, so as to hasten their death. This was an additional act of barbarity; but, at the

[785] Πάντες οἱ γνωστοὶ αὐτῷ (Vulg., *omnes noti ejus*), in the masculine.

[786] Deut. 21 : 22 f.; Josephus, *Bell. Iud.*, IV, v, 2.

[787] From the words *crura frangere*, to break the thigh. In Greek, σκελοπηγία.

price of new suffering, the time of the crucifixion was shortened.[788] The governor, having no reason to refuse the request, at once sent soldiers, who broke the legs of the two thieves. When they came to the Savior's cross, to do the same to Him, they saw that He was already dead. Therefore they did not break His legs. One of them, however, by way of precaution, gave Him the *coup de grace* by piercing His side with his spear.[789] As to which side was pierced, the Ethiopian translation and also the apocryphal gospels of the Infancy [790] and of Nicodemus [791] say it was the right side. This early belief rests on a historical basis.

From the gaping wound, large enough for the Apostle Thomas to put his entire right hand in it,[792] there flowed out a mixture of blood and water (*i. e.,* lymph). From this detail, doctors have concluded that the pericardium, the membranous sac enclosing the heart, must have been touched by the spear. The manner in which St. John relates this fact [793] shows that he considered it extraordinary, perhaps even miraculous. In two different places he testifies that he witnessed it, and he makes allusion to it in his First Epistle.[794]

This blood and water flowing from the Savior's side, many of the holy Fathers regarded as a symbol: for example, of the Church formed *de latere Christi dormientis,* as Eve came forth *de latere Adam;* [795] or, more commonly, of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist.[796] It is partly for the

[788] Suetonius, *Augustus, 67;* Seneca, *De Ira,* III, 32; Lactantius, *Instit. Divin.,* IV, 26.

[789] The Vulgate read ἤνοιξεν in the Greek; hence its translation, *aperuit,* "he opened." The correct reading is ἔνυξεν, "he pierced."

[790] Cf., Thilo, *Cod. Apocr. N. T.,* I, 587.

[791] Chap. 35.

[792] John 20:27.

[793] We owe the account of this entire episode to him (John 19:31–37).

[794] See 1 John 5:6–8.

[795] St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Augustine, St. John Damascene, and others.

[796] Tertullian, St. Augustine, etc.

purpose of perpetuating the memory of this mysterious occurrence that the Church directs her priests to pour a few drops of water into the wine at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

St. John considers these remarkable details a providential coincidence, fulfilling two ancient prophecies regarding the Messias' Passion. By God's command, great care was taken not to break the bones of the paschal lamb,[797] which was a type of the future Redeemer. And, says the Evangelist, Jesus' legs were not broken, as were those of the two thieves, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled [which says]: You shall not break a bone of him." And a second text was fulfilled by the thrust of the spear, for "again another Scripture saith: They shall look on him whom they pierced." This latter prophecy is taken from Zacharias,[798] who describes the contrition which the Jews will feel when they become converted and understand the great crime they committed in crucifying their Messias.

It may have been four o'clock in the afternoon when these last events took place; and at that season of the year in Palestine the sun sets at about six o'clock. Consequently whatever steps were to be taken regarding the Savior's burial had to be speedily attended to. Nothing could be done without first obtaining Pilate's authorization.

Then it was that Joseph of Arimathea intervened,[799] going to the procurator to obtain his consent that the sacred body of Christ be delivered over to him. It required courage [800] on Joseph's part to take this step after all that had happened, for it amounted to an open declaration of friendship for Him whom Pilate had condemned to the cross; and it also exposed Joseph to the anger of the Savior's enemies, who would have been glad to see the body deprived of honorable burial. But

[797] Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12.
[798] Zach. 12:10.
[799] Matt. 27:57 f.; Mark 15:42–45; Luke 23:50–52; John 19:38.
[800] St. Mark says: τολμήσας, "having dared" (Vulg., *audacter*).

he who became forever illustrious by this act, had all that was needed for undertaking it with some chance of success. First of all, he was a member of the Sanhedrin,[801] which fact enabled him to gain an immediate audience with the governor. Further, he possessed a considerable fortune and high moral qualities, both circumstances increasing his influence.[802] Moreover, having been of the number of those Jews who were "looking for the Kingdom of God," [803] and therefore expecting the Messias, to whom God had consigned the office of founding that kingdom, he became a disciple of Jesus, but had theretofore been only a secret disciple, "for fear of the Jews," as St. John says. In this he resembled Nicodemus,[804] and this human respect was not to their glory. But the Master's death removed their fears, and they now courageously joined together in procuring for Christ's sacred body the honors to which it was entitled.

Joseph was a native of Arimathea. To distinguish him from other Josephs, he is therefore usually called Joseph of Arimathea. He must have been living at Jerusalem for some time, since he was the owner of a tomb there. Palestinologists have not yet succeeded in determining the location of Arimathea. They hesitate between three principal sites: Ramleh, Rentis or Rentieh, and Neby Samuil. Ramleh is to-day a city of 7,000 population; it is built on a slight elevation that rises from the Plain of Sharon on the way from Jaffa to Jerusalem, about nineteen miles from the latter. It has in its favor a tradition going back at least to the time of the Crusades and seeming to be supported by the testimony of Eusebius of

[801] This is the real sense of the word *βουλευτής*, which the Vulgate translates *decurio*.

[802] St. Matthew: *πλούσιος*, "rich"; St. Mark: *εὐσχήμων*, "honorable"; St. Luke: *ἀγαθὸς καὶ δίκαιος*, "good and just."

[803] We have this detail from St. Luke, who used an equivalent expression at the beginning of his Gospel, when speaking of the aged Simeon and Anna, and those who were like them (Luke 2:25, 38).

[804] John 3:2; 7:50–52.

Caesarea [805] and St. Jerome,[806] who place Arimathea in the vicinity of Lydda (the present Ludd), near Ramleh. The village of Rentis, situated a little farther north, fulfils almost the same conditions; and lately it is favored by many. Neby Samuil, a picturesque hill about six miles northwest of Jerusalem, represents rather Maspha than Ramathaim Sophim, the birthplace of the prophet Samuel; this fact destroys its chance of being the site of Arimathea.[807]

St. Joseph, the spouse of the Blessed Virgin, had been providentially charged with watching over the Savior's childhood; another Joseph received the mission of attending to His burial. It may be that Pilate felt some remorse after allowing the unjust condemnation of Christ to be wrung from him; at any rate, he received Joseph's request with kindness. Yet at first he showed astonishment at Christ's death being so quick. We should not wonder at this if we consider how slow death by crucifixion usually was. But when the centurion had been questioned, and gave Pilate an official confirmation of the death of Jesus, the governor at once authorized Joseph of Arimathea to remove the body from the cross and to bury it as he might please. A permission of this sort sometimes cost a large sum of money.[808] Pilate generously does not require any payment. It may be that St. Mark intended to emphasize this fact by using a verb that indicates a gratuitous gift.[809]

Upon leaving the pretorium, Joseph at once procured a large piece of cloth as a shroud [810] for the Savior's body. Then he went to Calvary and there, along with Nicodemus,

[805] *Onomasticon,* under the word *Armathem Sophim.*

[806] *Epist.,* 108.

[807] See the Biblical Dictionaries and Atlases.

[808] Cicero, *In Verrem,* V, 45 and 51; Justin, IX, iv, 6.

[809] Ἐδωρήσατο (Vulg., *donavit*).

[810] The word σινδῶν (Vulg., *sindon*), by which it is designated by the Synoptics, sometimes means a piece of cloth of this sort, sometimes an undergarment.

who had likewise rid himself of every human fear, began the delicate task of letting the body down from the cross. This "descent from the cross" has often been depicted in Christian art. Sometimes the cross was lowered to the ground [811] so that the nails could be more easily removed. Or the cross was left standing, and the body "detached" [812] from it.

With what deep respect and sadness Joseph, Nicodemus, and the other disciples who lent their aid, removed the mortal remains of their beloved Master! Mary was there, and no doubt shared in the care bestowed on the sacred body of her Son. After washing the body, to remove the blood that disfigured it from head to foot, they wrapped it, each member separately, according to Jewish custom,[813] with bandages previously sprinkled with aromatic substances. For this purpose, Nicodemus had brought a hundred pounds of a precious mixture of myrrh and aloes, two very fragrant, oily, resinous substances. Myrrh, which had been brought to the Savior's crib,[814] was also used to embalm His body and perfume His tomb. Aromatic aloes comes from a plant native to India.[815] A hundred pounds [816] was a princely quantity, a prodigality recalling that of Lazarus' sister Mary.[817] Its purpose was not only to give the greatest possible honor to the Savior's lifeless body, but also, as was thought, to preserve it longer from corruption, by the combination of its preservative ingredients.[818]

[811] Quintillian, *Declam.*, VI, 9.

[812] St. Mark and St. Luke employ the technical term καθελών (Vulg., *deponens, depositum*). The expressions *detrahere, refigere de crucibus* (Seneca, *Vita Beata*, 19) were also in use.

[813] John 19:40; cf. 11:44.

[814] Matt. 2:11.

[815] The *aquilaria agallochum*. Cf. Fillion, *Atlas d'Histoire Naturelle de la Bible*, pl. 34, figs. 3 and 5.

[816] The λίτρα (Vulg., *libra*) of the Greeks was equal to about nine ounces.

[817] John 12:3–8.

[818] For these various details, see Matt. 27:59; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53; John 19:39–41.

After these preliminaries the holy remains, wrapped in the shroud which Joseph of Arimathea had provided and which, as St. Matthew tells us, had never been used before, were sadly and reverently carried to a tomb which belonged to Joseph and was located a short distance (about 130 feet) from Calvary. This sepulchre had but recently been hewn out of the rock. In the Orient it is not unusual for rich people to prepare their tomb in advance. Joseph gladly placed his tomb at the disposal of the Blessed Virgin. It was in a garden that seems to have also belonged to Joseph. According to various details recorded in the Fourth Gospel,[819] the sepulchre probably consisted of a single chamber, cut horizontally out of the rock. St. Luke and St. John remark that no one had previously been buried in it; this detail is of value for the sequence of the narrative, because it strengthens the proof of the reality of Christ's Resurrection. It was in this chamber that our Lord's body was laid. The arrangement was provisional, since the embalming was to be completed after the close of the Sabbath repose. The opening of the sepulchre was then closed, according to custom, by rolling before it a large stone for the purpose of keeping wild beasts and robbers away. These sepulchre doors are sometimes round and flat and usually fit the opening in the rock, being rolled forward to close the tomb, and backward to open it.[820]

In the Synoptics,[821] the account of the burial of Christ closes in the same manner as the narrative of the crucifixion. In both cases we see the holy women present, first standing at the foot of the cross, then seated before the sepulchre, carefully observing what is happening around them.[822] They do

[819] John 20:5–6, 11.

[820] De Saulcy, *Art Judaïque*, pp. 235–237; Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible*, pl. 30, fig. 6.

[821] Matt. 27:61; Mark 15:47; Luke 23:55.

[822] St. Mark: *ἐθεώρουν*. St. Luke: *ἐθεάσαντο*. These two verbs indicate close attention.

not go away until the Savior's remains are enclosed in the tomb. The sacred writers again mention the names of two of them: Mary Magdalen and Mary, the mother of James the Less and of Joseph. Their love for Christ, says Origen, held them to the spot. And they purposed returning immediately after the Sabbath, to complete the hurried embalming that preceded the burial; this is why they noted in what part of the tomb the body of Christ was placed. They went home before the beginning of the Sabbath, and remained there during the period of the Sabbath rest, sorrowfully waiting for the hour when they could return to the sepulchre with the spices they had bought partly Friday evening, partly Saturday evening.[823]

What suffering and what a void there was in Mary's heart when, in company with the beloved disciple, she reached the home of this adopted son, whom Jesus had just bequeathed to her! Yet she did not entertain the slightest doubt that Christ would shortly rise from the dead.

In the matter of the Savior's burial, St. Matthew [824] relates a final detail which reveals the Sanhedrists' violent hatred for Christ—a hatred that pursued Him even after death. On Holy Saturday morning a delegation, made up of chief priests and Pharisees, went to Pilate and, in behalf of the Great Council, said to him: "Sir, we have remembered that that seducer said, while He was yet alive: After three days I will rise again. Command therefore the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day, lest perhaps His disciples come and steal Him away, and say to the people: He is risen from the dead; and the last error shall be worse than the first."

How respectfully they address Pilate and how they moderate their voice to more surely obtain what they desire! And with what contempt they speak of Christ, again daring to

[823] Mark 16:1; Luke 23:56.
[824] Matt. 27:62–66.

call Him a "seducer"! But they still fear Him, even now that He is enclosed in a tomb, because they know of His prophecy that He would rise again on the third day after His death. That prophecy genuinely disturbed them. They also feared His disciples, who had been given full rights as to the disposal of His body. What would happen if these disciples should remove it, that they might afterwards say He had risen? What the delegation calls "the last error," would be the popular belief in Christ's Resurrection. The "first error" had been to consider Him the Messias. Their anxiety shows through their words. The day before, they were triumphant, with everything going agreeably to their wishes; now they are alarmed, as though their success might escape them; and they are humble suppliants before Pilate. What has become of their arrogance?

The procurator at once granted the request, though coldly. He merely said to them: "Have guards;[825] go, guard it as you please." Once again he agrees to place a detail of soldiers at their service. But he was no longer interested in a matter which he regretted having bothered so much about. The delegation withdrew very well satisfied. To make themselves masters of the sepulchre, they sealed the stone that closed its entrance. Then they stationed Roman soldiers beside it, warning them to exercise the strictest watchfulness.[826] All these precautions were providential. They served to place entirely beyond question the reality of Christ's Resurrection, because they increased the number of witnesses. Under conditions as we have just described them, would not fraud be impossible?[827] Without the Sanhedrin's minute precautionary measures, the lie about the removal of Christ's body by the

[825] This seems to be the best translation of ἔχετε.

[826] A guard of this sort was usually composed of sixteen men. Of these there were at all times four soldiers on guard.

[827] St. John Chrysostom, *Homil. in Matth., h. l.;* St. Jerome, *Comment. in h. l.*

disciples [828] would have been circulated with greater success.

What became of Christ's soul after it left His body, at the moment of His death on the cross? The Evangelists do not say; but our Lord, a short time before dying,[829] told the good thief that after His death He would go into "paradise," that is into limbo. There it was that His soul spent the time between His death and His Resurrection, engaged in consoling the just who were confined there, awaiting the blessed hour when the Savior would lead them into Heaven with Him, on the day of His Ascension. Such is likewise the teaching of St. Peter, who speaks of Christ "put to death indeed in the flesh . . . coming He preached to those spirits that were in prison," in the abode of the dead.[830] The earliest Christian tradition affirms the same fact,[831] which forms a dogma of the Catholic faith, mentioned at a very early date in the symbols, under the form "*Descendit ad inferos*," "He descended into the abode of the dead." [832]

[828] Matt. 28: 13–15.

[829] Luke 23: 43.

[830] See 1 Pet. 3: 18 f.

[831] St. Ignatius, *Epist. ad Magnes.*, 9; St. Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 72; St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, III, 22; IV, 36, 42, 55.

[832] See St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 3a, q. 52; Geschwind, *Die Niederfahrt Christi in die Unterwelt.* For the Rationalist view, see C. Clemen, *Niederfahren zu den Toten.*

PART VI

The Glorified Life of Christ

CHAPTER I

The Resurrection

Besides the large number of miracles performed by our Lord, the Gospel includes three of the first rank, which we may regard as essential: that of His birth, that of His person, and that of His Resurrection.[833] They are closely, and we might say indissolubly, connected. They explain and supplement one another. Since Jesus was truly the Son of God, it was supremely fitting that He be born of a virgin, and that His mortal body should not remain in the tomb. This last miracle was proclaimed by David more than a thousand years earlier, in a very clear passage which St. Peter and St. Paul apply to our Lord: [834]

> "My heart hath been glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced,
> Moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope;
> Because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,
> Nor suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption."

Such were the words of the royal poet and prophet [835] concerning the Messias, who was to "taste death" only in passing, for it was not possible that "the Prince of life," as St. Peter

[833] Fairbairn, *Studies in the Life of Christ*, p. 331.
[834] Acts 2:25–33; 13:34–37.
[835] Ps. 15:9 f. (Heb. 16:9 f.).

calls Him,[836] should remain for long in the tomb, like other men.

It is not only for Christ Himself that the fact of His Resurrection is essential; it is essential for His whole work, which rests on this mystery as on a necessary foundation. This is what St. Paul proves with all the force of his reasoning: "If Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have given testimony against God, that He hath raised up Christ, whom He hath not raised up . . . If Christ be not risen again, your faith is vain, for you are yet in your sins." [837] Christianity, then, would fall all at once if the Resurrection of Christ were not a historic fact. If Jesus of Nazareth did not come forth alive from the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea, that sepulchre would be the tomb, not only of a man, but of the religion which is connected with His name.

The foes of Christianity have felt this to be so; that is why [838] they have made every effort to disprove the fact of the Resurrection. But their efforts are vain. Our Lord foresaw that such would be the case. Hence, before ascending into Heaven, He expressly made His Apostles "witnesses" [839] of this glorious miracle, which, moreover, He had so often foretold to them. The Apostles understood that this office was confided to them; therefore, immediately after their Master's Ascension, they began to carry out their mission as witnesses with tireless zeal, first in Jerusalem itself, in the very presence of those who had brought about His condemnation and who may have seen Him bleeding on the cross.[840] No one of the Apostles grasped better than did St. Paul the lofty and

[836] Acts 3:15.
[837] See 1 Cor. 15:14–17.
[838] See Appendix XIV.
[839] Acts 1:8.
[840] Acts 2:22–36; 3:12–18; 4:10; 5:30–32.

mighty import of this dogma of Christ's Resurrection; he therefore returns to it so often in his Epistles, viewing it in all its theoretical and practical aspects, and concluding therefrom that Jesus is manifestly the Son of God, the Founder of Christianity.

But, of course, such a miracle calls for proof to arouse and to confirm belief. And it has been God's will that these proofs should be given us, solid and abundant, sketched with master hand by the four Evangelists and by the Apostle of the Gentiles. Yet none of the sacred writers describes the event itself, which, however, was probably not visible to human eyes. We have not a single word to mark its exact moment or its manner. From the indications it follows that, early in the morning of the third day after the crucifixion, therefore on the day following the Sabbath, the tomb in which the Savior's body had been buried was found empty by the holy women. At the moment of the Resurrection, Christ's soul, returning from limbo, again united with the body from which death had separated it. That body, while remaining substantially the same, as shown by the stigmata of its principal wounds, and while remaining material, since it could be touched and was capable of taking in food,[841] was endowed with new qualities that enabled it to become invisible, to traverse distances very rapidly, and to pass through solid substances. The person of the risen Christ was also the same as before, although externally it had about it something more heavenly, more stately; but it was still kindly and friendly and tenderly loving.[842]

The Evangelists and St. Paul are silent about the event of Christ's Resurrection, and this silence does honor to their veracity. But they set forth a considerable number of the

[841] Matt. 28:9; Luke 24:39–42.

[842] Certain Rationalists, such as Keim, complain that Christ's person is cold and lifeless in the Gospel narratives. Such a view is an utterly mistaken one.

Savior's appearances to various persons, either individually or in groups, both at Jerusalem and in Galilee, in such a way as to leave no doubt about the reality of the miracle. Let us at this point confine ourselves to the Gospel narrative; later [843] we will speak of St. Paul's accounts, which are merely a brief enumeration of the appearances.[844]

The narratives in all four Gospels possess great simplicity along with great beauty. In spite of their apparent calmness, we feel vibrating through them a feeling of joy and triumph, quite natural following such desolating events and treating of so majestic a mystery. As everywhere else, the four sacred writers keep their individual character and conform to their general and special purpose, by the choice of the incidents they relate. Each of them, therefore, takes, from his own recollections or from tradition, the details which best fit into his plan. St. Matthew and St. Mark follow each other closely, as usual; their accounts are less full than the other two. St. Matthew, after telling us the impressions produced upon our Lord's friends and enemies by the sight of the empty tomb, brings us at once to Galilee, where Christ had appointed that His disciples should meet Him. And he recounts only the two appearances of Christ to the holy women at Jerusalem and to the disciples on the mountain in Galilee. St. Mark's narrative is especially concise. He limits himself to sketching the Savior's appearance to Mary Magdalen, to the two disciples at Emmaus, and to the Apostles.[845] St. Luke's personal investigation enabled him to ascertain several additional details, which he sets forth in his lifelike and dramatic manner. The greater part of his narrative might be entitled, "The Day

[843] *Infra*, Appendix XIV, p. 687.

[844] See 1 Cor. 15:3–8.

[845] We have no occasion here to discuss the authenticity of verses 9–20 of chapter 16 of St. Mark's Gospel. The question will be found treated in introductions to the New Testament and in commentaries on the Second Gospel. Whoever was the author of those verses, the historical character of the events narrated is not disputed by Christian exegetes.

of the Resurrection at Jerusalem." He supplies interesting details about Christ's appearing to the disciples at Emmaus and to the Apostles assembled in Jerusalem. He also makes brief mention of His appearance to Peter; but he says nothing of His apparitions in Galilee. St. John's account, almost from beginning to end, mentions new details. The appearances of our Lord to Mary Magdalen and to the seven Apostles who were fishing on Lake Tiberias, are counted among the most beautiful pages of this Gospel. St. John's individual portraits of Mary Magdalen, John, Peter, Thomas, and of Christ Himself, are masterpieces.

From this summary it will be seen that, although each of the four Gospel narratives of the Resurrection contains details peculiar to itself, and although their combination forms a rich ensemble, yet they present several important variants. The authors meet for a moment upon the principal points, only to separate at once and to relate, each in his own way, certain special details. But none of them departs from the true facts; their divergencies arise from their envisaging different aspects of a complex event. It cannot be said that there is real disagreement between them on any single point.[846] The chief difficulty for the historian is to link together and coördinate the details supplied by the combined narratives in such a way as to obtain a chronological sequence at least approximately correct. Complete certitude is impossible in this matter; hence we must be satisfied with a likely arrangement.

I. At the Sepulchre

The Evangelists first acquaint us with various episodes that occurred in the vicinity of the tomb where the Savior's

[846] The Rationalists contend that there is such a disagreement. See *infra*, Appendix XIV, p. 690.

body had been laid. This tomb and the garden around it play a considerable part in the events of the morning of the Resurrection. All about the sepulchre disciples come and go, greatly stirred and disquieted, deeply troubled by what they witness.

The four Evangelists state that these events occurred on the day after the Sabbath, therefore, on the first day of the Jewish week. Early in the morning—the writers stress this point—the Galilean women who showed themselves so devoted to our Lord during His public life and at the hour of His death, set out to complete the process of embalming which the coming on of the Sabbath had prevented them from doing as perfectly as their affection desired. The sun had just risen when they drew near the garden. The Evangelists give us the names of most of them: Mary Magdalen in the first rank, Mary the mother of James the Less, Salome, and Joanna. On Friday they had been the last to leave the Savior's tomb, and they were the first to hasten there at the earliest possible moment, to complete their loving and sorrowful task.[847] As they were nearing the place, they thought of the heavy stone which they had seen set against the entrance to the tomb. "And they said one to another: Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" They knew that even with their combined strength they would be unable to roll it back; and they feared lest at that early hour they might find no one to render them this service. They were not yet aware that the Jewish authorities had set guards at the sepulchre and placed seals at the entrance. Hence it is evident they did not think of the possibility of the Savior's Resurrection. Their whole undertaking had an altogether different purpose in view. Great was their amazement when, upon going forward and raising their eyes to the slight eminence that formed Golgotha, they perceived that the stone had been rolled aside and the tomb was open.

[847] Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1–4; Luke 24:1 f.

The First Gospel furnishes some information about what happened shortly before their arrival at the sepulchre,[848] perhaps at the very moment of Christ's Resurrection. There was a violent earthquake in the neighborhood, as at the time of Christ's death; then an angel descended visibly from Heaven, came to the sepulchre, and, making light of the precautions taken by the Sanhedrin for guarding the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat upon it in the attitude of a conquerer and guardian. His face shone like lightning and his garments were white as snow. His whole outward appearance was of dazzling splendor, like our Lord's body at His Transfiguration.[849] The soldiers on duty at the sepulchre were terrified and, falling backwards on the ground, became like dead men for a few moments, unable to rise.

Let us return to the holy women of Galilee. After their first surprise and fear at the sight of the open tomb, they entered the sepulchre where the Savior's body had been laid. There another surprise awaited them. "They found not the body of the Lord Jesus," as St. Luke tells us. Moreover, sitting on the right side was another angel, also clothed in a long white garment.[850] The women were astonished and, in their fear, bowed their heads and did not venture to raise their eyes. But the angels said to them:

"Be not affrighted. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. Why seek you the living with the dead? He is not here, for He is risen, as He said. Come, and see the place where the Lord was laid. Remember how He spoke unto you, when He was yet in Galilee, saying: The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." [851]

[848] Matt. 28: 2–4.

[849] In the Bible, it is often in this form that the angels appear. Cf. Dan. 10: 5 f.; Acts 1: 10; 10: 30; Apoc. 10: 1, etc.

[850] Matt. 28: 5; Mark 16: 5; Luke 24: 3–5.

[851] Matt. 28: 5 f.; Mark 16: 6; Luke 24: 5–7.

This little discourse is full of life. Mention has often been made of the feeling expressed by these short, abrupt phrases. The angels sought first to reassure the holy women. They, friends of the Savior, had no reason to give way to fright,[852] like His enemies. We may detect a slight tone of criticism in the question that follows. How is it that they come looking for the risen[853] Savior in a tomb? But the angel at once reassures them, by asking them to come nearer that they may ascertain that Christ's body, which they had so recently seen placed in this sepulchre, is no longer there because it has come back to life. The angel next reminds them that, not long ago, when they were still in Galilee, the Divine Master clearly foretold His death and Resurrection.[854] Thereupon they did, in fact, remember those words, which had not been understood by them when first uttered.

One of the angels then said: "Going quickly, tell His disciples and Peter that He is risen and that He goeth before you into Galilee. There you shall see Him as He told you."[855] By this special mention of Peter, the angel showed him, in Christ's name, that his fault was pardoned and forgotten. This mention may have been on account of his office as head of the Apostolic College. We are at first surprised that the angel makes no reference to the appearance which our Lord will presently make to His Apostles, on that very day and again eight days later. But the heavenly messenger was not charged with announcing all the manifestations of the risen Savior. He speaks of those which are to take place in Galilee, as our Lord Himself does soon afterwards, on account of their more solemn and official character. But the others are not at all excluded. It was in Galilee that Jesus had begun

[852] The pronoun "you" is very emphatic.

[853] In St. Luke: τὸν ζῶντα (Vulg., *viventem*), "the living" *par excellence*. Cf. Apoc. 1:17 f.

[854] Mark 9:29 f.; Luke 9:22; 18:33, etc.

[855] Matt. 28:7; Mark 16:7.

His ministry; there He had associated the first disciples to Himself and His mission, and there they had lived happily with Him. He wished to see them again in those parts that so abound in sweet memories, and to give them His final instructions.

Mary Magdalen was not present at this scene, because, as soon as she perceived that the tomb was open, she did not even glance into it to note what had happened, but ran back and communicated the important news to Peter and John: "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we [856] know not where they have laid Him." [857] The hypothesis of her Master's Resurrection did not occur to her at all. Since the tomb was open, she supposed the body had been sacrilegiously carried off by His enemies or by some other evildoers. The thought of such a profanation distressed her.

With a desire to verify the facts, the two Apostles set out speedily. What followed is related in minute detail by the Fourth Gospel.[858] For a while Peter and John ran side by side; but John, the younger and more agile, soon left Peter behind and reached the sepulchre first. Without actually entering the tomb, he leaned forward from the outside and saw,[859] carefully spread on the ground, the linens, that is, the "bandages" in which Christ's dead body had been wrapped. In all likelihood, he was held at the tomb's entrance by the force of his feelings, not, as is sometimes said, by a regard for Peter's supremacy in the hierarchy. Peter was soon at John's side and, with his usual impetuosity, resolutely entered the burial chamber. He then observed,[860]

[856] The use of the plural proves that Mary Magdalen did not go alone to the sepulchre, but in company with the other women.

[857] John 20:2.

[858] John 20:3–10. St. Luke (24:12) refers to it briefly, and attributes it only to St. Peter.

[859] Βλέπει implies an attentive though rapid glance.

[860] Θεωρεῖ here indicates a minute inspection.

not only that the bandages were lying on the ground, as John had already noted, but that the shroud, which had covered Christ's head, was rolled up separately in another part of the tomb. These details showed that the sepulchre had not been the object of violence; malefactors or enemies would not have treated these linens so respectfully. We may well suppose that the angels were charged with these cares, after the Resurrection. John then entered and examined the linens, which possessed a sacred character from their contact with the body of Christ. The result of his inspection was a full belief in the Resurrection of his beloved Master. "He saw and believed": these are the words with which he closes his account. As he himself candidly avows, until then neither he nor his fellow-Apostles understood that it was necessary, according to the Scriptures, that Christ should rise from the dead, so slowly and with such difficulty did the concept enter their minds. "It was not the belief previously derived from Scripture, that the Christ was to rise from the dead, which led to expectancy of it, but the evidence that He had risen, which led them to the knowledge of what Scripture taught on the subject." [861]

The two Apostles returned home, to await the events that would follow. Peter wondered within himself at what he had just seen.[862] Perhaps the full light then began to illumine his mind.

II. The Appearances of Christ to the Holy Women

After the incident we have just described, events occurred in quick succession. Jesus Himself, by repeated appearances to the holy women and to His disciples, proved the undeniable reality of His Resurrection. Some of these apparitions took

[861] Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 632.
[862] Luke 24: 12.

place in the morning and in the vicinity of the sepulchre; others in the evening on the road to Emmaus and in the Cenacle; another, eight days later, again in the Cenacle; then came the appearances in Galilee, and lastly, the one on Ascension Day. The empty tomb was merely a negative proof of Christ's Resurrection. We now receive an abundance of positive proofs.

St. Mark asserts that our Lord "appeared first to Mary Magdalen." The details of this apparition are set forth by St. John with his usual delicacy.[863] Before we recount this incident, it is fitting that we should mention a certain pious conjecture which was adopted in the second century by Tatian in his Diatessaron, as St. Ephrem informs us,[864] and later by other Christian writers,[865] and still later by various illustrious theologians.[866] According to this surmise, Christ appeared first of all to His blessed Mother. His filial heart must have longed to console that beloved mother by His presence, to comfort her who had suffered so much with Him and because of Him, and to enable her to taste the firstfruits of His glorified life. At any rate, she had never doubted, but in full confidence awaited His Resurrection.

Mary Magdalen returned to the sepulchre after Peter and John had left, and remained at the entrance weeping[867] and sobbing, giving way to inconsolable grief. In the midst of her tears she leaned forward for a penetrating look into the tomb. There she beheld two angels clothed in white, sitting, one at the spot where the Savior's head had lain, the other where His feet had rested when His body was placed in the

[863] Mark 16:9–11; John 20:11–18.

[864] Harris, *Fragments of the Commentary of Ephrem Syrus upon the Diatessaron*, p. 34.

[865] The *Acta Thaddaei*, chap. 6, is an instance. Cf. W. Bauer, *Leben Jesu im Zeitalter der neutestam. Apokryphen*, p. 263.

[866] Notably St. Anselm and St. Bonaventure, Maldonatus and Suarez.

[867] She wept *aloud*, as the Greek text says (κλαίουσα).

sepulchre. They were like the cherubim above the propitiatory of the ark.[868] In kindly tones they asked her: "Woman, why weepest thou?" So great was her distress and so completely was her mind absorbed by the thought of the disappearance of the sacred body, that she failed to remark that they were angels speaking to her. She answered: "Because they have taken away my Lord; and I know not where they have laid Him."

She then turned round, and saw Jesus standing near by, but did not recognize Him. To some extent the Resurrection had transfigured the Master's outward appearance, making it more heavenly, or it altered His features in such a way that they were not at once recognizable. As we shall see, a similar instance occurred on the road to Emmaus.[869] The Savior repeated the angels' question: "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" By this second question He showed her that He knew the cause of her sorrow. Still distressed and preoccupied, she supposed that the stranger, whom she could barely make out and whom she met at such an early hour in the garden, was the gardener. Addressing Him with an ingratiating term of politeness, she said, "Sir,[870] if thou hast taken Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him; and I will take Him away." She clings to her first hypothesis, that the body must have been taken away. Love does not calculate. Mary speaks as though she alone could carry away the Savior's body and bury it elsewhere. And she does not mention the name of Jesus, imagining that what filled her own mind, occupied also the mind of others. How true and natural this is!

The Savior then spoke a single word, simply the name

[868] See 1 Kings 4:4.

[869] Mark 16:12; Luke 24:16.

[870] Κύριε (Vulg., *Domine*). This title lends itself to diverse applications. In the present passage it is equivalent simply to our "Sir."

"Mary." But that word, that name, went straight to Magdalen's heart, removing the bandage from her eyes. Turning suddenly, she cried out with a thrill of emotion: "Rabboni!" ("Master!"). This was all she could say; but in it we read her whole soul, with its sentiments of faith, love, and joy filling her heart at sight of the "Master." Merely her name, pronounced with the Savior's customary familiarity, was a complete revelation to her. In fact, the memory of sounds is tenacious, and we more quickly and surely recognize anyone by his voice, when he gives it a certain expression, than by his face.

Mary Magdalen then, no doubt, knelt at the Savior's feet, to kiss them with mingled love and respect. But he stopped her, saying: "Do not touch Me, for I am not yet ascended to My Father. But go to My brethren and say to them: I ascend to My Father and to your Father, to My God and your God." The first part of these words is not without obscurity. It has always embarrassed the commentators, who give various interpretations to it.[871] Why did He forbid Mary Magdalen to do what, almost immediately afterwards, He permits to the other Galilean women? [872] What connection is there between the prohibition, "Do not touch Me," and the alleged reason, "for I am not yet ascended to My Father"? The text itself suggests the following explanation. In her great joy at finding her beloved Master, Mary mistakenly imagined that He was going to resume His customary life among His friends, under the same conditions as before His death. Her kneeling at His feet seemed a way of saying that she did not want to lose Him again, that she wished to enjoy the delights of His presence. Jesus undeceived her by declaring that He is now with His friends in a visible, tangible way only for a very short time, because He must soon ascend to His Father in

[871] Cf. Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean*, p. 368.
[872] St. Augustine, *Tractat. in Ioan.*, 121, 4.

Heaven. Not till later can those who love Him enjoy Him unreservedly, when they rejoin Him in His heavenly home. Jesus knew Mary Magdalen's generous soul; He could ask her to make this sacrifice. As a partial consolation for her, He directs her to convey to the Apostles the message which the angels had already confided to the holy women. The Gospel then tells us that she did so at once. She found the disciples weeping in desolation;[873] but they refused to believe that she had really seen the risen Christ.

We left the other Galilean women on the way to Jerusalem. When they withdrew from the sepulchre, their feeling was a mingled one of fright and joy. The empty tomb and the apparition of the angels had filled them with fear, which only gradually disappeared. And they rejoiced because they knew reliably that the Savior was alive. Under the excitement and stress of this double impression, they ran. At first their distress of mind was so great that they did not wish to tell the Apostles anything about what they had seen and heard. Little by little they became less excited and, upon second thought, set forward to convey the angelic message to the Apostles.[874] Of a sudden, they saw Jesus in front of them.[875] He probably greeted them with the usual Jewish salutation, "Peace be to you!"[876] Their heart was filled with gladness. Coming up to Him, they kissed His feet and for a few moments remained prostrate before Him, offering their homage of respect and devotion. He said to them, as He had shortly before said to Magdalen: "Fear not; Go, tell My brethren that they go into Galilee; there they shall see Me." He then disappeared from their sight, by the power of the new properties of His risen body. Twice He called the

[873] Mark 16:10–11.
[874] Matt. 28:8; Mark 16:8; Luke 24:9–11.
[875] Matt. 28:9 f.
[876] In the Greek text we have: χαίρετε (Vulg., *avete*).

Apostles His "brethren." The use of this term, even after His Resurrection, indicates the great love He had for them. Shortly before His Passion He called them His friends.[877] But that appellation no longer satisfied His heart; "brethren" expresses a closer relationship.

When the Galilean women reported to the Apostles the orders of the angels and of Jesus Himself, their words were regarded as nonsense and their testimony was no more accepted than was that of Mary Magdalen. "These words seemed to them as idle tales;[878] and they did not believe them."[879] Again we see that the Apostles had not understood Christ's prophecies about His Resurrection in a strict sense.

The Gospel narrative brings us once more to the sepulchre and informs us what happened to the guards stationed there by the Jewish authorities. And we are told of another infamy of the Sanhedrin.[880] When these soldiers came back to their senses and overcame the fright that had been caused by the apparition of the angel, they sent some of their number to the chief priests to report the supernatural phenomena which had taken place before their very eyes. The chief priests then convoked a full session of the Great Council, to deliberate immediately with regard to this important development, which inflicted so humiliating a defeat upon them just when they were congratulating themselves upon their complete triumph over Jesus.

The result of the deliberation was that they should at once, by the use of money, secure the silence of the soldiers, as they had previously purchased Judas' complicity. But, as for their attitude toward the Savior, they were influenced solely by hatred. To the soldiers of the guard they gave a

[877] John 15:14 f.

[878] Λῆρος (Vulg., *deliramentum*): literally, nonsense, a mere story.

[879] The use of the imperfect (ἠπίστευον) denotes an obstinate unbelief, refusing to allow itself to be convinced.

[880] Matt. 28:11–15.

large sum of money, with this instruction, which puts a finishing touch to their baseness: "Say you: His disciples came by night and stole Him away when we were asleep. And if the governor shall hear of this, we will persuade him and secure you." By accepting this proposal, the Roman soldiers were accusing themselves of a grievous neglect of duty, which might cost them their lives. The greed for money and the chief priests' promise to fix up the matter with Pilate, should the affair reach his ears, induced them to accept this shameful bargain. They began at once to spread a report that the body had been taken away. Notwithstanding its absurdity, the lie spread. The Sanhedrists, we are told by St. Justin,[881] even took pains to send out emissaries to spread it abroad among Jewish communities far off. As St. Augustine remarks, "If the soldiers were asleep, what could they have seen? If they saw nothing, what is the value of their testimony?" [882] Thus the truth triumphs, despite this crude attempt at falsification.

III. Jesus Appears to Two Disciples on the Road to Emmaus, and to the Apostles in the Cenacle

The preceding apparitions took place on the morning of the Resurrection and in the vicinity of the sepulchre. Two of those which we are now to recount occurred in the evening of that same day; the third, eight days later.

The episode on the road to Emmaus [883] contains one of the most convincing proofs of our Lord's Resurrection. There have been so many controversies as to the site of Emmaus that about ten different places have been identified as that

[881] *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 108.

[882] *Exposit. in Ps.*, 63:7.

[883] Mark 16:12 f.; Luke 24:13–35. St. Mark makes only a brief reference to this incident.

village which was honored by the presence of the risen Christ. But only two seem to merit serious consideration. One is the ancient Nicopolis (now Anwas), about eighteen miles from Jerusalem, on the road to Jaffa; the other is the present village of Kubeibeh, also northwest of Jerusalem, about seven miles from it.[884] Anwas is favored by a tradition as early as the third and fourth century, Eusebius and St. Jerome being its principal witnesses in early times.[885] The tradition locating Emmaus at Kubeibeh does not go back beyond the Crusades. The difficulty comes from St. Luke's mention of the distance from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Several early manuscripts of the Greek text speak of 160 stadia, equal to about 18 miles;[886] others, and more numerous, manuscripts mention 60 stadia, about 7 miles. The former of these readings favors Anwas (Nicopolis), the latter Kubeibeh. Furthermore it is said in the account that the two disciples, when Jesus spoke of leaving them, urged Him to return with them to Jerusalem, where they would find the Apostles gathered in the Cenacle. If, upon leaving Anwas at nightfall, they would have had to make a journey of eighteen miles, would they have had time? The question is, therefore, somewhat complex. But the text favors Kubeibeh.[887]

The Gospel tells us that two of the Savior's disciples were on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus on the afternoon of that Sunday in the Paschal octave. One of them was called Cleophas,[888] a person otherwise unknown to us; he should not be confused with the "Clopas" mentioned by St. John.[889] The second disciple is not named, and many futile conjectures

[884] Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible,* plates 10 and 12.

[885] Eusebius, *Onomasticon,* under the word "Emaus"; St. Jerome, *Epist.,* 108.

[886] The Greek stadium was a linear measure, equal to about 600 feet.

[887] See the Dictionaries of the Bible, under the word "Emmaus"; also Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean,* p. 403.

[888] Κλεόπας, an abbreviation of Κλεοπάτρος, consequently a Greek name.

[889] John 19:25. Κλωπας, a name of Semitic origin. The Vulgate *Cleophas* is inexact.

have been made to identify him. As they walked along, they were talking together about the stirring and distressful events of the previous days, and were striving to find an explanation of them. While they were thus engaged in conversation, Jesus came up to them from behind, as though He too were on His way from the Holy City. For a few moments He walked beside them in silence. A supernatural power, similar to that which affected Mary Magdalen at the sepulchre, prevented them from recognizing Him,[890] unless we are to understand literally St. Mark's statement[891] that Jesus "appeared in another shape," that is, with features transformed by the Resurrection.

Presently He turned to them and asked in a friendly way: "What are these discourses that you hold one with another as you walk and are sad?" Not only their speech, but their faces bore signs of deep sorrow. Cleophas answered, in tones of surprise: "Thou art indeed the only stranger come to Jerusalem [for the Paschal feast] who hast not known the things that have been done there in these days." Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, His driving out the sellers from the Temple, His discourses in the sacred precincts of the Temple, then His arrest, condemnation, and crucifixion, had, as we can well understand, thrown the whole city into a state of great excitement. It seemed impossible that any of the Jews who came for the festival from the different provinces of Palestine or of the Roman Empire, had not learned of these things. "What things?" asked the Savior, thus putting a question that would encourage them to speak openly to Him. He whom they took for a stranger had inspired them with such confidence that they candidly disclosed all that was passing in their soul. They said to Him:

[890] St. Luke: "Their eyes were held that they should not know Him."
[891] Mark 16: 12.

"Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet, mighty in work and word before God and all the people; and how our chief priests and princes delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we hoped that it was He that should have redeemed Israel; and now besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company affrighted us, who before it was light, were at the sepulchre, and not finding His body, came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who say that He is alive. And some of our people went to the sepulchre, and found it so as the women had said, but Him they found not."

These words express the feelings experienced since Holy Thursday night by the disciples who were then in Jerusalem. The dominant note is one of distress, perplexity, sadness. What was to be thought of the events? What was to be expected after such a reversal of the fondest hopes which they had founded on Jesus? Yet some points remained unshaken: an ardent love for our Lord, a strong bond of union between His loyal followers, a vague hope for the future, which perhaps would not yet lead to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom, but at least its preparation. More precisely than this they did not know what to believe about the Master, whether as to the past or the future. When the two disciples left Jerusalem, they had not learned of the Savior's appearances to the holy women. Their account of Him, of His miracles, and of His preaching shows what great confidence He had inspired in His followers. But a certain disappointment is evident in their words, "We hoped." On the other hand, although Christ's prophecy that He would rise again three days after His death, was not fully comprehended, yet it had not been altogether forgotten; and they cling to it as to an anchor of salvation. But the third day is drawing to a close; upon what are they to rely now? The narrative of the two disciples

acquaints us with all the events, and does so with perfect impartiality. And they tragically conclude: "But Him they found not."

Jesus did not interrupt their account. When they finished speaking, He said to them, with a sternness moderated by great kindness: "O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory?" We have again and again observed, during the Savior's public life and after His arrest at Gethsemani, that neither the Apostles nor the other disciples had understood this necessity of humiliation and suffering for the Messias, although the Master had frequently enough laid stress upon it.[892] Like most of their countrymen, they were mindful only of those Messianic prophecies which concerned His glory and triumph. Jesus now develops His sublime thesis by reviewing all the Messianic passages of the Old Testament. Starting with the Books of Moses, at the beginning of the Bible, and passing through the other inspired writings, especially those of the prophets, He draws their attention to what had been foretold regarding the Christ.[893] We easily surmise what comfort those clear and moving explanations must have brought to the souls of the two disciples, as they joyfully followed our Lord's words with close attention.

As the little group neared Emmaus, Jesus made it appear that He was going farther. But His two companions earnestly begged Him: "Stay with us, because it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent." They invited Him to pass the night with them, either at their home, if they were residents of Emmaus,[894] or, if such were not the case, at the

[892] See especially Luke 9:22; 13:33; 17:25.

[893] We have cited the chief ones in the early part of this work, Volume I, pp. 209–224. See also Fillion, *La Sainte Bible Commentée*, I, 2–10.

[894] This is the view held by Eusebius, *Onomasticon, loc. cit.*, and by St. Jerome, *Epist.*, 108.

inn. He accepted their invitation and sat down at table with them. When they had been served, our Lord took a loaf of bread and, after reciting the usual form of blessing, broke it between His fingers, and gave a piece to each of the two disciples. There is no sufficient reason for supposing that He consecrated this bread before handing it to them. At that moment "their eyes were opened," says the Evangelist, and they recognized that their companion was Jesus. But they were not given the happiness of His remaining with them, for He disappeared at once, as in the preceding apparitions, by virtue of the "agility" possessed by His risen body, which was no longer subject to the ordinary laws of space and gravity.

When the two overjoyed disciples had somewhat recovered their calmness, they spoke their impressions to each other, saying: "Was not our heart burning within us whilst He spoke in the way, and opened to us the Scriptures?" At first they had failed to notice that kindly warmth. Now they knew that it was owing to the presence of their beloved Master. Although night had come on and for that very reason they had urged Jesus to remain with them, yet they did not hesitate to set out promptly for Jerusalem, so eager were they to have the Apostles share the great truth which they had just witnessed. Retracing their steps to the Holy City, over the same road by which they had come in Christ's company—but now no longer sorrowful—"they found the Eleven gathered together, and those that were with them," probably in the Cenacle. As soon as they entered, they were greeted with tidings as happy as the news they themselves were bringing. They were told: "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." Then they in turn related what had happened on the way to Emmaus, and how they recognized Jesus when He broke bread. Their account at first was received with doubt, as St. Mark informs us; but the hesitation did not last long,

because the Savior Himself suddenly appeared in the midst of the gathering.

The other manifestations of the Savior on that glorious day had been individual; this one took place for the sake of the nascent Church, represented by the Apostles and a number of disciples. St. Luke and St. John recount the scene in detail, each supplementing the other; St. Mark makes only a brief reference to it.[895] Some features, pointed out by St. Luke, are so precise, almost like a medical report, that they constitute an invincible argument for the reality of the Resurrection.

As we have already remarked, our Lord's body, after His Resurrection, took no account of material obstacles. Suddenly He was present in the room, notwithstanding the fact that the doors had been carefully locked because, especially now that the tomb seemed to have been violated, the disciples feared that the Sanhedrin's wrath would fall upon them. "Peace be to you," He said, using the habitual Jewish form of salutation, which was so fitting in the present case. "It is I," He continued, "fear not"; for He read in the disciples' faces the perplexity and fright which filled their souls. In fact, they thought they were looking at a ghost.[896] He reassured them, saying: "Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See My hands and feet, that it is I Myself. Handle and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see Me to have." The better to convince them of His identity, He showed them His hands and feet, which, even after His Resurrection, still bore the now glorious stigmata of the nails that had pierced them.[897] The certainty obtained by the sense of touch is stronger than that obtained by the eyes. Yet, even in the face of this decisive proof, there

[895] Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36–43; John 20:19–23.

[896] The Greek uses the verb *θεωρεῖν*.

[897] St. Ignatius, *Epist. ad Smyrn.*, III, 1, mentions this same fact.

was hesitation on the part of many who, a few moments before, had credited the apparitions of our Lord to Simon Peter and to the disciples at Emmaus. As St. Luke, with psychological nicety, says, their very joy helped to make them skeptical. So happy were they at again seeing their Master alive, that they scarcely ventured to trust their good fortune.[898] The Evangelists all emphasize the slowness with which the Apostles and the other disciples let themselves be convinced of the Savior's Resurrection.[899] We are told, at this very point, that Jesus "upbraided them with their incredulity." [900] In all this God had a purpose. The fact that the closest friends of Jesus required so many proofs, was permitted by Divine Providence to prepare the firmest guaranties for our faith. Had they been more docile, we should have suspected them of allowing themselves to be misled by illusions of an impressionable imagination, seeing the risen Christ everywhere. Forced to yield, as it were in spite of themselves, to the evidence of the miracle, they remain the competent and irrefutable witnesses of the great fact on which the credibility of the Gospels rests.[901]

To end the doubts of the most obdurate of His disciples, Jesus asked: "Have you here anything to eat?" They offered Him a piece of broiled fish and a honeycomb,[902] the remains of the frugal meal which they were finishing when Christ appeared before them. He ate some of this food in their presence. Certainly the body of the risen Christ had no need of food.

[898] Ancient authors make similar remarks; for example, Seneca, *Thyest.*: *"Proprium hoc miseros sequitur vitium numquam rebus credere laetis"*; Livy, XXXIX, 49: *"Vix sibimet ipsis prae nec opinato gaudio credentes."*

[899] Cf. Matt. 28:17; Mark 16:8, 9–11, 12–13; Luke 24:9–11, 21–25, 37, 41; John 20:9, 25.

[900] Mark 16:14.

[901] St. Leo (Sermo 71) expresses the same thought briefly and forcefully: *"Dubitatum est ab illis, ne dubitaretur a nobis."*

[902] The words καὶ ἀπὸ μελισσίου κηρίου (Vulg., *et favum mellis*) may not be authentic; they are not found in several important documents.

Yet it retained the ability to receive food and in some way to absorb it.

When the Savior saw that all were fully convinced of His Resurrection, He said to them again: "Peace be to you!" He then conferred astonishing powers upon them with these simple but sublime words: "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you." Thus He officially constituted them the continuators of His divine mission. Soon we shall hear Him repeat this commission in more extended and majestic language. Then He breathed upon them, saying: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." By this symbolic breathing upon them, recalling that by which the Creator communicated life to the first man,[903] Jesus transmitted, so to speak, a new life into His disciples, so as to help them fulfil worthily the lofty task He had entrusted to them. At that same moment they partook of a real though partial effusion of the Holy Ghost, while awaiting the full and more solemn communication of His gifts on Pentecost. A heavenly power, that of forgiving sins as God Himself does, was connected with this holy effusion. By bestowing this superhuman power upon them, Christ completed their consecration as His representatives and ambassadors to men. It is beyond question that He then and there instituted the Sacrament of Penance.[904]

To St. John we owe the dramatic account of an incident closely connected with this apparition of our Lord.[905] In consequence of a providential circumstance, due perhaps to a sort of gloomy discouragement which led him to flee from the company of his fellow-Apostles, Thomas had not seen the

[903] Gen. 2:7.

[904] Council of Trent, Sess. IV, can. 3; Bellarmine, *De Poenitentia*, Book III, chap. 2; Corluy, *Comment. in Evang. Joannis*, 2d ed., pp. 474–476.

[905] John 20:24–29.

risen Savior. Upon his return, the other Apostles said to him with a deep feeling of joy: "We have seen the Lord." He answered them with a firmness worthy of a better cause: "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." Thus he declared, and set down his conditions, that he was resolved to have the question settled only by the testimony of his senses and his personal experience. To see is not enough; he must have proof through the sense of touch. What unyielding obstinacy! We can imagine the grim determination with which the grief-stricken and half-despondent Apostle pronounced his final words: "I will not believe."

The Savior, in His infinite goodness, deigned to grant this kind of proof to the unhappy disciple who, for the moment, had been rendered so incredulous by sorrow. Eight days later, when the Apostles were again together, and Thomas was with them, Christ appeared to them suddenly, under the same circumstances as on the evening of the Resurrection. After the usual salutation, "Peace be to you!" He turned to Thomas and said: "Put in thy finger hither, and see My hands, and bring hither thy hand, and put it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing." Our Lord of His own accord offers to fulfil all the conditions which Thomas had declared he would require for believing in the Resurrection. Upon hearing these words, which repeated his own language almost word for word, Thomas' only reply was a cry of adoration: "My Lord and my God." This was a fine act of faith, repairing his past unbelief. Christ was willing to accept this somewhat belated confession of faith and said in a tone of gentle reproach: "Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed." To believe despite the absence of external proofs is

the perfection of faith. Yet it was needful that the disciples should have seen the risen Jesus and touched Him, to furnish proofs for our belief.

IV. Manifestations of the Risen Savior in Galilee

The Gospels relate explicitly only two manifestations of our risen Lord in Galilee: one on the shore of Lake Genesareth;[906] the other on a mountain[907] the exact location of which is not indicated. At first glance the accounts in the Second and Third Gospel,[908] which at this point are very condensed, would seem to refer to Christ's apparitions in Jerusalem. But it is probable that St. Mark is referring to the manifestation that took place on the Galilean mountain, and St. Luke to one of those which occurred shortly before our Lord's Ascension.

Soon after the apparition at which Thomas figured so prominently, the Apostles left Jerusalem and returned to Galilee in conformity with the promise[909] and the command[910] they had received from their Master. While awaiting further instructions, they resumed, partly at least, their former occupations, so as to earn their daily bread.

The apparition on the lake shore brings us to the spots in Galilee that had been most favored by Christ's presence, preaching, and miracles; it is one of the most charming accounts in the Fourth Gospel. Especially abundant are the picturesque details showing that the author himself witnessed the event. One evening Simon Peter, who had probably returned home to Capharnaum, said to six of his fellow-Apostles: "I go a fishing." These six were the two sons of

[906] John 21:1–24.
[907] Matt. 28:16–20.
[908] Mark 16:15–18; Luke 24:44–49.
[909] Matt. 26:32; Mark 14:28.
[910] Matt. 28:7–10; Mark 16:7.

Zebedee (James the Greater and John), Nathanael (Bartholomew), Thomas (Didymus), and two others, who are not named, but who in all likelihood also belonged to the Apostolic College. As usual Peter is the prime mover among the Apostles. His companions gladly accept his implied invitation. "We also come with thee," they said. All seven entered a boat and labored the whole night without taking anything, as on another memorable occasion, although night is the best time for fishing.[911] At daybreak Jesus appeared to them on the shore. The fishermen did not recognize Him at first, as had happened to Mary Magdalen and to the two disciples at Emmaus. In a tone of friendly and familiar solicitude, He asked them: "Children,[912] have you nothing to eat?" [913] This was as much as to say: Did you catch any fish? They answered: "No," thus declaring the complete failure of their night's labor. He then said: "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find." The right side of a boat is the side at the right of a person facing toward the prow. It may be they had been fishing from the left side. Following the stranger's advice, they let down the net, and it was immediately filled with such a quantity of fishes that they could not raise it. When we were considering the first miraculous draught of fishes, we spoke of the shoals of fishes in Lake Tiberias.[914] Christ, by His supernatural foreknowledge, was aware that one of those big shoals would pass at the right of the boat just when the Apostles were casting their net.

The sight of this miracle recalled to the mind of the beloved disciple that other miracle which he had witnessed on

[911] Luke 5:4–11.

[912] In the Greek, *παιδία*, "little children"; but this diminutive, which is a mark of familiarity, differs from *τεκνία*, another diminutive, which is somewhat more tender and delicate. (Cf. John 13:33.)

[913] The etymological sense of the noun *προσφάγιον* (Vulg., *pulmentarium*) is: "that which is eaten with," *i.e.*, with the bread; in the present case it is evidently eaten with the fish.

[914] Volume II, page 168.

this same lake at the time of his being called by Christ. With a sudden intuition, he cried out joyfully: "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard John's remark, he hastily put on his tunic out of respect for the Master, for he was then only half-dressed, after the manner of fishermen; and he tucked the ends of the tunic in his belt. Then with his usual eagerness, he jumped into the lake and swam to shore.[915] The other disciples remained in the boat, which slowly towed the net full of fishes. They were then, as the Gospel tells us, only about two hundred cubits (about 300 feet) from the shore.[916]

Upon landing from the boat, they saw some hot coals, and fishes being cooked on them. Nearby was some bread. It seems that, in the Evangelist's mind, the Savior had obtained this food by a miracle. "Bring hither of the fishes which you have now caught," the Master said. It should be noted that Christ did not ask for these fishes to add them to the ones already cooking. The context [917] shows that the meal consisted only of the miraculous bread and fishes mentioned above. The fishes that Christ calls for are for Himself. They are a symbolic figure of the souls that His Apostles are to win for Him throughout the world. The meal was supplied entirely by our Lord. As ancient writers tell us, it expressed the need of divine concurrence and heavenly graces for the fruitful performance of the duties of mystical fishermen. Without Christ's help, what would the Apostles have been able to accomplish, in spite of all their efforts? [918]

In obedience to the Savior's command, Peter returned to the boat, which was now moored close in to the shore, unfastened the net, and began to draw it in, assisted by the other

[915] "Peter and John here show their individual characters: the former more ardent, the latter more sublime; the former more prompt, the latter more discerning." (St. Chrysostom, *Hom. in Joan., h. l.*)

[916] The cubit was equal to about 20 inches.

[917] See John 21: 13, in the Greek text.

[918] Fillion, *L'Évangile de S. Jean,* p. 380.

Apostles. The fishes were then counted: there were one hundred and fifty-three, all of large size. And they wondered that the net had not broken under so heavy a weight. In earlier times the number 153 used to be interpreted mystically; to-day we consider that the Evangelist cites the number simply to emphasize the greatness of the miracle.

Jesus then said to the disciples: "Come and dine." It may be that a respectful awe kept them aloof. This frugal morning meal was symbolic of the strength He conferred on His friends, in view of the hard labors they were very soon to undertake for Him. The Evangelist remarks that "none of them who were at meat durst ask Him: Who art Thou? knowing that it was the Lord." We can understand that, in the presence of the risen Christ and after so impressive a miracle, the disciples did not venture to take the friendly liberties of former days. Moreover, besides the respect which halted questions on their lips, they were certain of His identity. The Savior took the bread and gave part to each of the seven disciples; and He did the same with the fishes. The liturgical blessing must have been pronounced before the meal, although the Gospel does not mention it. There is no reason for supposing that Jesus Himself partook of the food.

This second miraculous draught of fishes was, like the first,[919] accompanied by important words of Christ to St. Peter, conferring sublime powers upon him. But the present occasion is the more solemn of the two. During the special apparition with which the Savior favored Peter in Jerusalem, He had absolved him from his fault. He now confirms his dignity as head of the Apostolic College. It is Peter's complete and definite installation; on an earlier occasion he had been chosen and had received the promise.[920]

When the meal was ended, Jesus asked Peter in the presence

[919] Luke 5: 10.
[920] John 21: 15–19.

of the other disciples: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these?" It is noteworthy that, whereas the Evangelist in his narrative continues to give the Apostle the names of Simon Peter or simply Peter, Jesus three times addresses him by his family name, "Simon, [son] of John," [921] as though wishing to make him win back the noble name of "Cephas," which for a time, yielding to flesh and blood, he had ceased to deserve. Love, a love more generous than that of any other of the Apostles, is the condition on which the Savior will grant the son of John so eminent a prerogative. Peter had protested that he would never forsake his Master, even though all the others should abandon Him, and had then sadly denied Him. It was right that Christ should require of him a greater devotedness before conferring more power and honor upon him. The Apostle, remembering his recent presumption and the lamentable fall which followed, humbly replied: "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." He lets his answer rest upon the Savior's infallible knowledge rather than upon his own feelings, the frailty of which he had experienced.

From a close examination of the text, we see that the Apostle, in designating his respectful devotion, does not employ the same expression as his Master. The latter uses a verb [922] which applies to the affection of the will, a stronger affection and of a loftier nature. Peter employs a different verb,[923] which denotes an affection that is perhaps warmer and more tender, but likewise more human. Mindful of his fault, he dares not declare that he possesses that constant and self-confident love mentioned by his Master; at least he knows himself well enough to promise all the natural fondness

[921] This name appears with three variants in the Greek text: Σίμων Ἰωνᾶ, Σίμων Ἰωάνου and Σίμων Ἰωνάννου (Vulg., *Simon Joannis*). The last two are the best warranted.

[922] Ἀγαπᾷς με (Vulg., *diligis me*).

[923] Φίλω σε (Vulg., *amo te*).

of his heart. "Feed My lambs," [924] our Lord replies, thus entrusting him with the office of honor and trust, of nourishing the flock over which Christ Himself will remain the great Shepherd.[925]

After a short pause, Christ again asks Peter, in almost the same terms: "Simon, [son] of John, lovest thou Me?" And again the Apostle answers: "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." The Savior's next words contain a slight variant in the original text: "Tend My flock." [926] The lambs have grown up and require greater care; such is the *nuance* expressed in the words used by Christ. Once again Jesus puts the same question to Peter: "Simon, [son] of John, lovest thou Me?" The Apostle had thrice denied his Master; to wipe out his fault completely, a threefold public protestation of love is required of him.[927] But the Apostle, unaware of what Jesus designed, was greatly saddened by this insistence, which seemed to cast doubt on his affection. He therefore replies more forcibly: "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." This time he appeals to Christ's universal knowledge, by which He knew all things and read the depths of all hearts, and therefore was not ignorant of His Apostle's feelings towards Him. Jesus was now satisfied and, with majestic benevolence, replied: "Feed My sheep." There is an important shade of meaning in this expression, which is not an exact repetition of either of the two previous declarations. The lambs have become full-grown sheep; but they are still entrusted to Peter.

From this impressive dialogue accredited doctors of the

[924] The Greek diminutive *ἀρνία*, "little lambs," is most expressive.

[925] Cf. 1 Pet. 5:1–4, which seems to be an echo of this scene.

[926] *Ποίμαινε τὰ προβατία μου* in place of *βόσκε τὰ ἀρνία μου*. The verb *βόσκω* means "to nourish"; *ποιμαίνω* implies more, and stands for the whole conduct of the shepherd toward his flock.

[927] This is a frequent comment of the holy Fathers. St. Augustine (*Tractat. in Joan.*, 123), for example, says: *"Redditur negationi trinae trina confessio, ne minus amori lingua serviat quam timori."*

Church have drawn dogmatic conclusions regarding the primacy of Peter and his successors. Bossuet, in his famous sermon on the unity of the Church,[928] gives a fine summary of that tradition based on Christ's infallible words: "Jesus pursues His purpose. After saying to Peter, the eternal preacher of the faith: Thou are Peter . . . , He adds: And I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Everyone is subject to these keys—king and people, shepherd and flock. We gladly proclaim it . . . and we glory in our obedience. It is to Peter that Christ gives the command to feed and govern all, both lambs and sheep, and even the shepherds. Shepherds over the people, and sheep with regard to Peter, in him they honor Jesus Christ."

Our Lord, again speaking, says to Peter: "Amen, amen I say to thee, when thou wast younger, thou didst gird thyself and didst walk where thou wouldst. But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee and lead thee whither thou wouldst not." In this way Christ foretells to the Prince of Apostles the martyrdom that will terminate his life in his Master's service. As may often be observed in the Gospels, the coloring of this picture is taken from the practices of daily life. Orientals tuck up their flowing garments in a belt or girdle for greater convenience in walking or working.[929] A young man easily fastens his own girdle and does not depend on anyone's help. But when he grows stiff with age and lapses into that universal dependence on others, and into the infirmity of old age, which is so vividly described in the Book of Ecclesiastes,[930] he must have others fasten his girdle for him, and for this purpose must stretch out his arms. And that is the posture of a crucified body, as remarked by the Fathers and by classical

[928] Lachat ed., XI, 592–600.
[929] Fillion, *Atlas Archéologique de la Bible,* pl. 1, figs. 4, 5, 7.
[930] Eccles. 12: 1–8.

writers of Greece and Rome.[931] Our Lord's words to Peter were, therefore, a prophecy that he would be put to death on a cross. Such was the interpretation commonly given to the Savior's words by early writers, in agreement with the thought expressed by the Evangelist: "This He said, signifying by what death he [Peter] should glorify God." St. Peter's crucifixion at Rome is a clearly proved historical fact. The evidence for it goes back to Pope St. Clement[932] and Tertullian.[933] The chief of the Apostles had been dead many years when St. John wrote down the Savior's prophecy in his Gospel.

Our Lord then said to Peter: "Follow Me." He wished to take Peter aside to give him some special instructions regarding the future of the Church. "Peter turning about, saw that disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also leaned on His breast and said: Lord, who is he that shall betray Thee?" Although Christ's words, "Follow Me," were addressed only to Peter, John too, the privileged disciple, began to follow Jesus at a distance.

Peter, seeing this, asked the Savior: "Lord, and what shall this man do?" Peter and John were united in bonds of close friendship. It was therefore natural that Peter's interest in John should prompt a question as to the latter's future destiny.[934] Jesus answered somewhat sternly: "If I will have him remain till I come, what is it to thee? Follow thou Me?" While refusing to satisfy Peter's curiosity about John, the Savior plainly indicated that the beloved disciple would live a long time. But His purposely vague words were soon

[931] Arrian, *Epictet.*, III, 26; Seneca, *Consolat. ad Marc.*, 20; Tertullian, *Scorp.*, 15, and *De Praescr.*, 35; Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, II, 25, etc.

[932] *Epist. I ad Cor.*, V: 4.

[933] *Scorp.*, 15. On the humble and generous request by St. Peter to his executioners, that he be crucified with his head downwards, see Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, III, i, 2.

[934] St. Jerome, *Adv. Jovin.*, I, 26: *"Nolens deserere Joannem, cum quo semper fuerat copulatus."*

changed into a legend,[935] and for a long time it was rumored among the faithful that this disciple would not die. St. John himself protests against this false rumor, saying: "Jesus did not say to him: He should not die; but, If I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to thee?" With this remark the Evangelist closes his account of our Lord's apparition on the shore of Lake Tiberias.

St. Matthew is the only one who explicitly relates a certain other manifestation of the risen Savior.[936] It took place on a Galilean mountain, which Christ had probably designated previously for the purpose. We are not told what mountain it was, and any hypothesis on the subject would be groundless.[937] Although the Evangelist speaks of the "eleven" Apostles as being witnesses of this manifestation, several exegetes think it possible to identify it with the apparition mentioned by St. Paul in his First Epistle to the Corinthians;[938] he speaks of "more than five hundred brethren" as being present. If such be the case, as we think rather likely, St. Matthew speaks of the "Eleven" because they were the chief personages and because to them especially were addressed the words which Christ spoke on that solemn occasion.

As soon as our Lord appeared (suddenly, as He usually did since His Resurrection) the disciples prostrated themselves before Him. Yet this time too, despite the evidence, some of those present at first gave way to doubt. This fact proves that the Apostles were not the only ones there; it would be impossible to understand any hesitation on their part, since they had several times been in contact with the risen Christ. The

[935] See St. Augustine, *Tract. in Joan.*, CXXIV, 2.

[936] Matt. 28: 16–20.

[937] But there have been various conjectures. Some have favored Thabor, others the mount of the Beatitudes, others Carmel, although it was situated outside Galilee. The Greek has the article: "on *the* mountain." But, of course, this does not indicate what mountain.

[938] See 1 Cor. 15: 6.

Divine Master, mingling in the dense throng of that multitude, easily overcame their slowness to believe. He then spoke. But unfortunately we possess only a summary of His discourse, or perhaps its concluding words.

"All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

These words of inexhaustible content were uttered with a royal, divine authority. They contain a claim to supreme power, an order concerning the whole world, and the most magnificent of promises. The claim serves as a basis for all the rest. It is of vast import. St. Paul, in several of his Epistles, uses expression after expression in his attempt to describe the glory and power with which God the Father invested His beloved Son after His Resurrection. For instance, at the beginning of the Epistle to the Colossians [939] we read: "The Son of His love . . . is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for in Him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominations or principalities or powers: all things were created by Him and in Him. And He is before all, and by Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He may hold the primacy. Because in Him, it hath well pleased the Father, that all fulness should dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself." [940] We admire this development of our Lord's words, but it is not more expressive than the apparently simple words themselves, "All power is given to Me in heaven and in

[939] Col. 1:15–19.
[940] See also Phil. 2:9–11.

earth," which declare our Lord to be equal to God Himself and attribute to Him universal power over angels and men and all nature.

We should note that we have here no question of Christ's authority as Son of God—that was not "given" to Him—but of a new authority which He merited by His humiliations and sufferings.[941] This is the full and magnificent realization of the eighth Psalm, which speaks so beautifully of the power of the ideal man, consequently of the Messias. Furthermore it is the realization of many glorious promises which God made to His Christ in the prophetical writings of the Old Testament; for example: "He gave Him power and glory and a kingdom; and all peoples, tribes, and tongues shall serve Him. His power is an everlasting power that shall not be taken away." [942] Nothing, therefore, can exempt itself from His sway. God alone is not subject to Him. During His public life, Jesus never, perhaps, attributed to Himself so universal a power.

It is by virtue of these plenary powers that He issues His commands to those whom He had long since chosen to continue His work. Their first privileges He conferred on them in Galilee when He sent them to preach; and in that same province He confirms and completes their official rights and duties, thus finishing His Messianic work on earth. On an earlier occasion He narrowly restricted the ministry of the Apostles. Now, however, He sends them forth to conquer the whole world: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations"; literally, according to the Greek text: "Transform all nations into disciples." In making disciples, it is necessary to initiate individuals and to instruct them. The initiation is the rite of baptism, administered in the name of the Holy Trinity. The instruction embraces both Christian dogma and Christian

[941] See Maldonatus, *Commentar., h. l.*
[942] Dan. 7:14; cf. Ps. 2:8, etc.

morals, acceptance of the truths contained in the gospel, and obedience to Christ's precepts. The Apostles will not merely proclaim the Messias of the Jews—they will present Him as the Savior of the world.

The Apostles might well have regarded the task as superhuman and taken fright at the prospect of undertaking it, if Christ had not at the same time promised to be constantly with them to aid them in their labors and difficulties. But He gave them the assurance that He would never leave them, that His intimate and efficacious presence in their midst would endure and last "even to the consummation of the world," that is, till the end of time.

Near the close of the Second Gospel, we read certain words of our Lord which, in a general and vague way, are connected with His first appearance to the Apostles in the Cenacle, because the Evangelist abridges his account. But the words were spoken in Galilee, at the time of the Savior's appearance on the mountain:

"Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In My name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover." [943]

The command expressed in the first words of this passage bears a close resemblance to the words of St. Matthew's Gospel, which we have just considered: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them . . ." [944] In St. Mark's account, too, we see that Christ wishes all barriers of nationality to be removed and the gospel preached "to all creation," that

[943] Mark 16: 15–18.
[944] Matt. 28: 19.

is, to all mankind. In this account, the command is set forth in a more developed form. The preaching will arouse faith, baptism will be the pledge of that faith and will procure salvation. Those who refuse to believe will expose themselves to eternal damnation.

In St. Matthew's account, Christ promises His Apostles to remain with them always, even after He outwardly leaves them and ascends into Heaven. In the present passage, the promise is at the same time more general and more particular: it is more general, because addressed to everyone "that believeth"; it is more particular, because it will consist in powers of a miraculous nature, the chief of which are enumerated by way of example. Their purpose was to procure the common good of the Church and principally to confirm the preaching of the gospel. The Acts of the Apostles,[945] the writings of the early Fathers, and the history of the Church show us the holy use which was always made of those powers and the happy results produced.

[945] See also St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, chapters 12 and 13.

CHAPTER II

The Ascension

DURING the forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension Jesus comforted His disciples and continued their training, which the Holy Ghost was to finish on Pentecost. As directed by Christ, they went from Galilee to Jerusalem at the appointed time. There, a few hours before His Ascension, He gave them His last admonitions and bade them farewell, as St. Luke relates at the close of his Gospel and at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles. [946] The Savior, at that final meeting with His Apostles, cast a look back over the years He had lived with them and reminded them how often He had repeated that the Old Testament prophecies about Him had to be fulfilled to the letter. "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you,[947] that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me."

"The Law, the Prophets, the Psalms": this formula stands for the entire Old Testament by mentioning its three great divisions, which contain all the outstanding Messianic prophecies.[948] Since that divine book is of such importance for Christian instruction, being the very foundation thereof, Christ "opened their understanding" so that thenceforth they were able, by themselves, to interpret the sacred texts in an illuminating manner. The Holy Ghost soon afterwards com-

[946] Luke 24:44–49; Acts 1:4–8.

[947] That is, before His death. He was no longer with them in the same way as formerly.

[948] See Volume I, pages 209–224.

pleted this gift, by virtue of which the first preachers of the gospel were able to discover in the Jewish Bible the details that referred to their Divine Master. And this gift was subsequently transmitted to the Church, which became the infallible depositary of the true sense of the sacred books. And to this gift we owe the incomparable interpretations of the holy Fathers, notably Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and other great Catholic exegetes. In fact, only by the light coming from on high can we understand and interpret Holy Writ.

Our Lord then said:

"Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day; and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. And I send the promise of My Father upon you; but stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high."

We see how insistently He dwells upon the necessity of His Passion and death, which were so clearly foretold by the prophets. And He briefly mentions the four qualities of Apostolic preaching. It will be in His name; it will announce repentance and forgiveness of sins; it will extend to all nations; it must begin at Jerusalem. The Jewish capital, being the center of the true religion, had a right to this privilege; and the Apostles were careful not to deprive Jerusalem of that privilege; in fact, it was in the Holy City that they first preached the Christian faith, with prodigious success.

At this point some of the disciples asked our Lord a question which seems inopportune and surprising, especially at such a time: "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" [949] They were referring to the kingdom of the Messias, such as the Jews then considered it: an out-

[949] Acts 1:6.

ward, political kingdom, sumptuous and brilliant, with the descendants of Abraham as its chief subjects, a kingdom in which the pagans would have the right of citizenship on condition that they incorporate themselves in Judaism, if they were so fortunate as to survive the overwhelming defeats which the Jews would inflict upon them in battle. It is evident that these disciples still had an imperfect understanding of their Master's instruction, although it had been so precise, and that they were in great need of the Holy Spirit. Our Lord answered:

"It is not for you to know the times or moments, which the Father hath put in His own power; but you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the uttermost parts of the earth." [950]

These different instructions were closely followed by our Lord's glorious Ascension, which brought His earthly life to a close. It is very briefly related by St. Mark and St. Luke.[951] Having entered the world in a miraculous and mysterious manner, the Incarnate Son of God in a mysterious manner also and by another miracle ascended into Heaven. He went to the Mount of Olives, accompanied by the Apostles, a number of disciples, and some holy women who were then at Jerusalem. Probably He was also accompanied by His blessed Mother, since she was in the Cenacle with the assembly of the faithful on Ascension Day.[952] With these devoted friends our Lord reached a certain spot on Mount Olivet, a spot now occupied by the Mussulman village of El Tour, somewhat less than a mile northwest of Bethania.[953] From this

[950] Acts 1:7 f.

[951] Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50–53; Acts 1:9–11.

[952] Acts 1:14.

[953] Fillion and Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible*, pl. 15. St. Luke (24:50) says that Jesus led His Apostles and disciples ἕως πρὸς Βηθανίαν, "toward

same hill, a few weeks before, the procession had set out that conducted Jesus in triumph to Jerusalem as the Messias. It now becomes the point of His departure for Heaven. An unbroken tradition, going back to the year 316, guarantees the authenticity of this site. There St. Helena erected a small rotunda-shaped shrine, which was subsequently destroyed and rebuilt several times; the Mohammedans have turned it into a mosque, as they have many other Christian sanctuaries.[954] Our Lord, after bidding farewell to His disciples who were present, raised His arms and imparted His last blessing to them. And while thus blessing them, He slowly and majestically rose from the ground before the very eyes of His disciples. Soon a cloud hid Him from view.

Even after He had disappeared, the disciples remained prostrate in the attitude of adoration and kept looking from side to side, hoping to see Him again. Two angels in human form appeared to them, clothed in white as on the day of Christ's Resurrection, and said to them: "Why stand you looking up to heaven? This Jesus who is taken up[955] from you into heaven, shall so come, as you have seen Him going into heaven," that is, at His second coming at the end of the world.

The Apostles and disciples then went back to Jerusalem,

Bethania," *i. e.*, in the direction of that village (this is the most authentic reading, instead of *ἕως εἰς*). In the Acts of the Apostles, St. Luke (Acts 1:12) removes whatever vagueness there might be about the topographical detail in his Gospel, by saying that the Ascension took place upon "the mount that is called Olivet, which is nigh Jerusalem, within a Sabbath day's journey." The two data supplement each other. A "Sabbath day's journey," according to the rabbis, was a distance of 2,000 cubits (about two-thirds of a mile).

[954] On the tradition and the structure here referred to, the reader will find interesting and scholarly information in the work of Fathers Vincent and Abel, *Jérusalem, Recherches de Topographie . . .*, II, 360–412, and also in Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, III, 41, 43; *Demonstr. Evangel.*, VI, 18.

[955] While various New Testament passages (Eph. 4:10; 1 Pet. 3:22, etc.) speak of Christ ascending to Heaven by His own power, other texts (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:2, 11, 22; 1 Tim. 3:16, etc.) represent His ascension as something passive, attributed to the power of God.

with a void in their hearts, knowing they would no more enjoy the happiness of their beloved Master's presence on earth. Yet they were filled with joy, as St. Luke tells us, because the Savior had ascended to His Father, where His sacred humanity—that humanity which had suffered so much affliction—would be in honor and peace. Thus gloriously ends the Savior's life among men. And now He is seated at the right hand of His Father, governing, protecting, and blessing His Church. It is owing to Him that it grew so quickly and that, despite the peril of bloody persecutions and the greater peril of heresies, which often assailed it, it has persevered in faith and love.[956]

[956] See *infra*, Appendix XV.

CHAPTER III

Who Was Jesus?

About a year before His death, the Lord Jesus asked His Apostles: "Whom do men say that the Son of Man is?" Those who knew Him but imperfectly, through His preaching and miracles, regarded Him merely as a great prophet: Elias, Jeremias, or John the Baptist miraculously come to life. But when He said to the Apostles: "But who do you say that I am?" one of His most intimate Apostles, who had lived for many months in constant association with Him and to whom He had most fully revealed Himself, made the famous reply: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." [957] Is not this the very reply we would make to Christ, without the slightest hesitation, if He were to ask us, as He asked the Apostles: "Who do you say that I am?" The words would come from our lips and hearts with a ready earnestness. To make our profession of faith the more complete, we would repeat His chief titles, saying that He is the most perfect of the sons of Adam, the greatest of the prophets, the most powerful of miracle-workers, the most eminent of doctors, a religious reformer of the very first rank, our Savior and Redeemer, universal King, the Messias, the beloved Son of God. Let us now attempt briefly to justify these various titles.

I. Some of Our Lord's Titles

After a study of the Savior's life we must say that He is a personage unique in the history of mankind, the most per-

[957] Matt. 16: 13–16; Mark 8: 27–29; Luke 9: 18–20.

fect of the children of Adam. We might repeat the words of one of Pascal's friends: "Even had there been no prophecies about Christ, and even had He performed no miracles, there is something so divine in His teaching and His life that one must be charmed by it; and, as there is no real virtue nor uprightness of heart without love of Christ, there is no loftiness of mind or delicacy of feeling without admiration for Christ, . . . for Him alone, and for none other in the world." [958]

Prescinding from His supernatural character (were that possible) and regarding Him only under a human aspect, we see that He possesses qualities and perfections which, throughout the course of history, have never been met and never will be met with in a mortal man. If we should make a comparison between Him and any other great man chosen from the noblest, the most renowned, the most gifted, we would easily see that neither paganism nor Judaism ever produced anyone that could even remotely rival Him, from the numbers of their heroes that were most conspicuous for their intellect, their deeds, and their holiness. What are Solon, Socrates, Plato, Moses, David, Elias, Isaias, beside our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone united in His person all the features of an ideal nature? In Him appears a harmonious combination of perfections which is to be found nowhere else. He truly possesses, as St. Paul beautifully says,[959] a universal preëminence; He excels all created beings, even the angels.

We sometimes divide men into three categories, according as the life of the intellect, or of deeds, or of the heart is predominant in them. Into one or other of these classes may be placed the most notable members of mankind. Christ bears some likeness to the greatest in each of these categories. But it is impossible to assign Him to any particular class, because

[958] Quoted in the *Correspondant*, October 25, 1919, p. 258.
[959] Col. 1:18: ἐν πᾶσιν αὐτὸς πρωτεύων (Vulg., *in omnibus ipse primatum tenens*).

in Him there shone the qualities of each, and we do not find in Him any of those lacunae or imperfections that are to be observed in men who shine only by their intellect, or by their deeds, or by their heart. In Jesus we see a complete nature, one extremely rich and captivating, one influencing mankind to the highest degree. "How came this man by this wisdom?" was a question asked by some who heard Him.[960] What a mind His was! What a thinker He was, what an orator, what a moralist, and what a poet too! All this we have shown in another part of this work.[961] And what authority He had! He was powerful in word and deed, even more so than Moses.[962] He had an aim and a purpose, and not for a moment did He ever swerve from them, devoting all His time in doing good,[963] without a thought of repose for Himself. Before Him and after Him there have been men of heart, such as Paul, Vincent de Paul, and Francis Xavier, who had a passionate love for their brethren and devoted themselves heroically to them. But Christ sacrificed Himself even more, as a physician of body and soul, as a good shepherd going in search of stray sheep. He "loved me and delivered Himself for me," says St. Paul.[964] How He was loved in return, and how He is still loved! Although His life's span was but a few years, and He belonged to a small and obscure nation, yet, as He foretold,[965] He has drawn to Himself men of all times and countries as no other ever has. He is a citizen of the whole world. No one else has so greatly contributed to the overthrow of the barriers separating the different peoples of the earth.[966] St. Paul rightly calls Him the second Adam,[967] the second head

[960] Matt. 13:54.
[961] Volume I, pages 403–406, 435–476; Volume II, pages 314–323, etc.
[962] Acts 7:22.
[963] Acts 10:38.
[964] Gal. 2:20.
[965] John 12:32.
[966] Eph. 2:14 f.; Gal 3:28.
[967] See 1 Cor. 15:45–49.

of humanity, infinitely superior to the first. He opened a new era, which divides the history of mankind into two distinct parts.

Most Rationalist theologians acknowledge this human superiority, this universal supremacy of Christ;[968] but they refuse to go farther and to acknowledge His supernatural qualities. Of these latter, one of the most striking is often mentioned in the Gospel by the title of prophet. One day our Lord, speaking of John the Baptist, said that he was "a prophet . . . and more than a prophet." [969] Far more than the Baptist, He Himself is the prophet *par excellence,* the greatest of all prophets. In the words of Eusebius of Caesarea, "He is the only high priest of all men, the only king of all creation, the only prophet of the prophets of the Father." [970] This is the exact truth. Our Lord claimed to possess the gift of prophecy. After being rejected the second time at Nazareth, He said: "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country and in his own house." [971] Again and again the multitudes gave Him this title, looking upon Him as "a prophet mighty in work and word," [972] as the prophet of Nazareth,[973] placing Him even in the ranks of Israel's most illustrious prophets.[974]

Like the prophets of old, Jesus read the depths of men's hearts, discerning the most secret thoughts of those about Him.[975] "He needed not," says St. John, "that any man should give testimony of man; for He knew what was in man." [976] How many of His prophecies we read in the Gospels!

[968] *V. g.,* Crooker, *The Supremacy of Jesus.*
[969] Matt. 11:9; Luke 7:26.
[970] *Hist. Eccl.,* I, 3.
[971] Matt. 13:57; Mark 6:4; Luke 4:24; John 4:44. See also Luke 13:32 f.
[972] Luke 24:19. Cf. Matt. 21:11; Luke 7:16, 39; John 4:19; 6:14; 7:40; 9:17; Acts 3:21–23; 7:37, etc.
[973] Matt. 21:11.
[974] Matt. 16:14; Mark 6:15; Luke 9:8, 19.
[975] Matt. 9:4, and parallel passages; Mark 12:15; 14:18; Luke 11:17, etc.
[976] John 2:25. See also 1:48; 4:18, 29; 6:65; 11:11, 14.

Some of them are individual, regarding Nathanael,[977] Simon Peter,[978] Lazarus' sister Mary,[979] Judas,[980] the beloved disciple,[981] Christ Himself, referring especially to His Passion, death, Resurrection, and His second coming at the end of the world.[982] The others are collective: some concern the whole Apostolic College;[983] some refer to the general future of the Church, its lowly beginning, its marvelous spread, the persecutions it will undergo, and the victories it will win thanks to His invincible help;[984] still others are about the terrible fate of the Jewish people and of Jerusalem;[985] and others refer to the great events at the end of time.[986] Nothing is hidden from Him, neither the present nor the future, neither things of earth nor those of Heaven. By His mighty power He lifts the veil that conceals them.

We have elsewhere treated the question of our Lord's miracles with sufficient completeness.[987] At this point we wish to recall that He was an incomparable miracle-worker and not only did He Himself perform a vast number of miracles in the whole realm of nature, but He gave His Apostles and disciples the power to perform similar prodigies. As He Himself plainly declared, His miracles were such as "no other man hath done."[988]

He is the most eminent of doctors. Yet He did not leave

[977] John 1:51.
[978] Matt. 16:18; Mark 14:30; Luke 22:31; John 1:42; 21:18.
[979] Mark 14:9.
[980] John 13:21.
[981] John 21:20–23.
[982] Matt. 16:21; 17:12, 21 f.; 20:17–19, 22–23, 28; Luke 12:50; 13:32; John 2:19–21; 3:14 f.; 10:15, 17–18; 12:24, 32–33; 13:1–3, etc.
[983] Matt. 19:28; Mark 14:27; Luke 22:30; John 15:20; 16:2, etc.
[984] Matt. chaps. 13 and 24.
[985] Matt. 21:40–44; 23:37–39, etc.
[986] Matt. 24:29–31; 25:31–40, etc.
[987] See Volume II, pages 334–347, 645–672, and especially Fillion, *Les Miracles de N.-S. Jésus-Christ.*
[988] John 15:24.

a systematic body of doctrine. His teaching was given in fragments, part in one place and part in another, in the presence of most varied audiences. Nevertheless, by grouping His sermons and discourses, and His simple replies to questions asked Him here and there, we form an unequalled *ensemble* of surpassing richness and beauty, which has been a basis for developments by the most learned Christian scholars and the greatest teachers of theology.[989] His doctrinal and moral revelations have enlightened, regenerated, and sanctified the world. If all men were to practice His precepts, our poor earth would become almost a paradise. In this present work we have been at pains to quote His words in full, as they are recorded in the Gospels. No one can read them attentively without forming a lofty idea of Him who uttered them. Nothing comparable to them can be found in the words of the greatest thinkers of paganism, or even in the inspired writings of the Jews, or in all of Christian literature, even though His doctrine is its basis and guide. The true God, through Moses, the prophets, and sacred poets, had communicated revelations of a very high order to His chosen people. But in that realm, too, Christ has no equal. We have seen how far He surpassed the Scribes. He opened up superb vistas regarding God and nature, the human soul and its destiny, the mysteries and splendors of the Messianic Kingdom, and also about Himself. His doctrine is inexhaustible. The more it is studied, the more riches are found in it; and the more new strength is derived therefrom for the practice of what it teaches. It enthralled its first hearers, and it is equally the delight of those who study it to-day.[990]

Jesus is a Savior—our Savior. Such is precisely the meaning of His name, which was revealed to Mary and to Joseph be-

[989] It was Father Fillion's intention to write a book that would be a development of the synthesis here set forth. But his death in 1928 prevented his realizing that desire.—*Translator.*

[990] We have already touched upon this. See Volume II, pages 314–323.

fore His birth.[991] To him who was to become the Savior's foster-father, the angel said: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." The word "Jesus," in Hebrew, means "salvation of Jehovah," or, in shorter form, "Savior." [992] The significance of this name He fulfilled perfectly, since the aim of His life was "to seek and to save that which was lost." [993] Again and again, in the various books of the New Testament, He is called by that name.[994] St. Paul speaks of Him as "the author of salvation," [995] "the cause of eternal salvation." [996] As the people of Sychar said, at the time of His short visit among them, He is "the Savior of the world." [997] He fulfilled the signification of that name all through His life, but most especially on the cross. When He received the name at His circumcision, for the first time He shed His blood for us, that blood which He would later shed to the last drop.

In our day, particularly in Liberal theological circles, when Christ's work is spoken of, He is often called a reformer. That title is quite correct, if it is used without the idea of lessening its import. We are told that He was an able and mighty reformer in the domain of religion and morals, struggling with all His might against the many abuses that had been introduced into the practices of the theocratic nation, into the conduct and teaching of its leaders, even into the Temple and the public worship of God. In this sense He accomplished wonderful reforms, far exceeding those accomplished by the best kings of Israel and the most zealous of its prophets.

[991] Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:31.
[992] See Volume I, page 260.
[993] Luke 19:10.
[994] Acts 5:31; 13:23; Phil. 3:20; 2 Pet. 3:18, etc.
[995] Heb. 2:10; in the Greek, *αρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας* (Vulg., *auctor salutis*); literally: "the guide of salvation."
[996] Heb. 5:9.
[997] John 4:42.

This title, however, if applied to our Lord too narrowly, would rather lessen His prestige. He was a creator and innovator, much more than He was a simple reformer, since He founded the Messianic kingdom and established the institution that bears His name, the Christian Church, which gradually spread over the whole earth and was endowed by Him with unending life. During His lifetime He merely sketched the main lines of that edifice; but He laid its foundation upon Peter and the Apostles; about Himself He gathered its first members, who, after Him, were to become its chiefs; He imparted His instructions to them for their future conduct and that of their successors; He gave them full powers; He laid down the broad lines of the doctrines that must be believed and the morality that must be practiced; He instituted the Sacraments. Then He ascended into Heaven, from whence He continues to direct and protect His Church, as He promised.

"Art Thou a king then?" Pilate asked Christ. He answered: "Thou sayest that I am a king." [998] He was king of the Jews by right of birth, because He was heir to the throne of David; [999] He became king of the entire world by divine institution, as chief and founder of the Messianic kingdom. This He is also by right of conquest, but a wholly peaceful conquest, as was foretold by one of the most beautiful canticles in the Psalter.[1] Compared with His kingdom, what were the most famous kingdoms of antiquity, formed as they were by violence and carnage? They have had no permanence; His is eternal, since it will cease to exist on earth only to have an endless duration in Heaven.

It is as Messias that Jesus is King and that He founded the Church. Therein we see one of His most important titles; to it

[998] John 18:37.
[999] Luke 1:32.
[1] Psalm 71 (Hebr. 72).

are related all those we have just enumerated. St. Matthew and St. Mark add this title to His name in the first line of their Gospels: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ"; "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." In another passage St. Matthew uses the expression: "Jesus, who is called Christ." [2] At Jacob's well the Samaritan woman said to Jesus: "I know that the Messias cometh." "I am He who am speaking with thee," the Savior replied.[3] But it is needless to insist on this fact, so evident is it that Jesus presented Himself to His countrymen as the Messias and was considered such by a large number of them.[4] "God hath made both Lord and Christ, this same Jesus," St. Peter said to the Jews.[5] In the Epistles of St. Paul, this title is to be found 389 times, often used as a proper name.[6]

II. Jesus Christ is the Son of God; He is God

With much solemnity St. John, near the end of his Gospel, addresses these words to his readers: "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you may have life in His name." [7] Christ's office, His whole life, is summed up in these two sublime names —the Christ, the Son of God. As a worthy conclusion to this work, we wish, by a short synthesis, to indicate how undeniable are His rights to the possession of the divine nature.

No one can contest the fact that all the New Testament writings declare and prove, in one way or another, this uniform thesis: Jesus Christ is the Son of God; He is God. Now in simple terms, then again in eloquent and often figurative

[2] Matt. 1:16.
[3] John 4:25 f.
[4] Particularly on the day of His triumphant entry into Jerusalem.
[5] Acts 2:36.
[6] According to Geden's New Testament Concordance. It fills almost ten columns.
[7] John 20:31.

language, but always clearly and unhesitatingly, they attribute to Him the divine essence, the qualities reserved to God alone, and divine operations. We quoted above [8] a text of St. Paul, taken from the Epistle to the Colossians. In that same Epistle the Apostle sums up his thought by saying that in Jesus "dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead." [9] And he calls Him "God blessed for ever." [10] At the beginning of his Epistle to the Romans,[11] he announces that he has been chosen to preach "the gospel of God . . . concerning His Son, who was made to Him of the seed of David, according to the flesh, who was predestinated the Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of sanctification, by the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead." This passage is of special value because Paul considers Jesus under two different aspects: according to the flesh, and according to the Spirit of holiness; in His human nature and in His divine nature, which are clearly distinguished from each other. Several pages might be filled with the texts in which the Apostle of the Gentiles emphasizes the Savior's divine character. All the judgments which he expresses about Christ lead to this fact: Jesus is God-Man, the Son of God, the coequal with God.[12]

The Acts of the Apostles, the Catholic Epistles, and the Apocalypse, if we were to question them on this point, would make the same reply. In all of them our Lord is depicted as the Son of God in the strict and metaphysical sense of the term. So manifestly true is this fact that it is accepted by exegetes and theologians of all parties. Some of the New Testament authors have written only a few pages; yet the divinity of Christ appears therein, either directly or indirectly.

[8] Page 599.

[9] Col. 2:9.

[10] Rom. 9:5.

[11] Rom. 1:1–4.

[12] By way of a few examples, we cite the following: Rom. 1:4, 9; 8:3, 34; 1 Cor. 1:17–30; 2 Cor. 4:4; Gal. 1:16; 2:20; 4:4; Eph. 4:13; 1 Thess. 1:10; Heb. 1:3.

There exists no divergence among them; all affirm the ineffable greatness of their Master, Son of David, Messias, Son of God. Hence it is that the Church, from the first hour of her existence, regarded the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ as the characteristic and distinctive dogma to which all her members must adhere. The heretics who soon began to attack that doctrine were quickly rejected from her pale.[13]

But it is especially the Gospels we must consult for their thought and that of Jesus himself upon this capital point. The belief of St. John is evident. His Gospel opens with the glorious prologue regarding the Logos. We have already quoted it in full,[14] and we have just cited some of the last lines of his Gospel. Between these two professions of faith in the Incarnate Word, everything is devoted to that divine Logos, who is Jesus Himself, so that we may say of the Fourth Gospel that it is "the Gospel of the Son of God." This same idea is at the basis of the Synoptic Gospels, although less frequently manifested there. Let us now enter into some details to justify our assertions.

First we turn our attention to the expression "Son of God," which is applied to Jesus about twenty times in the Synoptics and ten times in the Fourth Gospel. This title is given to the Savior by the angels,[15] by Satan,[16] by the demoniacs,[17] by the disciples,[18] by God Himself,[19] by Caiphas,[20] by the

[13] See 1 John 2:22 f.; 3:23; 4:2 f., 15; 5:1–12.

[14] John 1:1–18; see Volume I, page 205.

[15] Luke 1:35. The angel Gabriel to Mary: "The Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Cf. Matt. 1:20.

[16] Matt. 4:3, 6; Luke 4:9: "If Thou be the Son of God."

[17] Matt. 8:29: "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Son of God?" Cf. Mark 3:12; 5:7; Luke 8:28.

[18] Matt. 14:33: "Indeed Thou art the Son of God." Cf. Matt. 16:16; Mark 1:1; John 1:49; 11:27; 20:31.

[19] At Christ's baptism and Transfiguration. Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Luke 3:22; 9:35.

[20] Matt. 26:63: "I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us if Thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Cf. Luke 22:70.

Jews,[21] and by a Roman centurion.[22] Jesus, too, attributes it to Himself.[23] But it has not the same meaning in all cases. In some instances it is merely synonymous with Messias; for example, on the lips of the demoniacs and probably also of Satan. Again it designates nothing more than a moral sonship, a close union with God, resulting from a very high degree of holiness: this is the meaning of the expression as used by the centurion.[24] But in a considerable number of these passages, it has a meaning infinitely higher and marks a sonship in the strict sense; it declares the divine nature of Him to whom it is applied. In the words of the angel to Mary, in those uttered by the heavenly voice at the time of the baptism and Transfiguration of Jesus, the expression "Son of God" certainly must receive this interpretation; the same may be said of the text of the Fourth Gospel, where Jesus is called "the only Son of God," and very probably in St. Peter's confession,[25] and perhaps also on the lips of Caiphas.

In several passages of St. John's Gospel our Lord gives Himself this title.[26] And very often, in describing the relations that exist between God and Him, He speaks of the "Father" and the "Son," or the "only Son" in such a way that His words necessarily designate that He possesses the divine nature, a kind of sonship which belongs to Him exclusively. These expressions recur again and again in His discourses, particularly in chapters 5, 6, 8, 14–17. His enemies did not misunderstand the meaning of those expressions, for they accused Him of

[21] Matt. 27:40: "If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." Cf. Matt. 27:43; John 19:7.

[22] Matt. 27:54: "Indeed this was the Son of God." Cf. Mark 15:39.

[23] John 3:18: "He that doth not believe, is already judged; because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Cf. John 5:25; 10:36; 11:4.

[24] In the same sense, Matt. 5:9, 45; Luke 20:36; Rom. 8:14; 9:26; Gal. 3:26, etc.

[25] See Volume II, pages 536–538.

[26] John 5:25; 9:35; 10:36; 11:4, etc

blasphemy, and one day, after hearing them, they were on the point of stoning Him. And when Jesus asked them: "Many good works I have showed you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?" they answered: "For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy; and because Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God." He did not protest that they had misunderstood; He insists upon His declaration and makes it even more striking.[27]

With regard to these names of Father and Son, we may note that, while presenting God as the common Father of all men,[28] Jesus never puts His filial relations on the same level with theirs. He says "My Father" and "your Father," [29] but never "our Father." [30] This difference is significant.

The Gospels give even more convincing proofs of the Savior's divinity. Numerous assertions of our Lord enable us to fathom the depths of His consciousness of His own divinity. Again and again He declares that He "has come" from God and that He returns to God: [31] such words certainly designate participation in the divine nature. He calls Himself the living bread descended from Heaven.[32] He affirms that He alone has seen and knows the Father,[33] that He is one with the Father, that all men should honor Him, the Son, as they honor the Father.[34] The Fourth Gospel, although the most abundant from this point of view, has not a monopoly of these expressive declarations. St. Matthew and St. Luke [35] quote one which would alone suffice to give us the Savior's

[27] John 10:31–38.
[28] *E. g.*, Matt. 5:16, 48; 6:1, 4, 6, 14, 26, etc.
[29] John 20:17, contains both expressions.
[30] Except at the beginning of the Lord's prayer; but in that instance it is not He who is considered as addressing this prayer to God.
[31] John 6:38, 46, 63; 7:28, 33, 36; 8:14, 16, 18, 26, 42; 13:3; 16:28, 30.
[32] John 6:32–42.
[33] John 6:46.
[34] John 5:23; 10:30.
[35] Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22.

whole thought: "All things are delivered to Me by My Father. And no one knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither doth anyone know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him." Such relations evidently suppose an identity of nature between God and Jesus. Moreover, our Lord affirms that identity in most explicit terms when He says: "I and the Father are one." [36]

Furthermore, He attributes to Himself, and there are attributed to Him in the Gospels and in the whole New Testament, prerogatives essentially divine. His preëxistence is several times attested in the Fourth Gospel, not only by the sacred writer,[37] but also by Himself. "Before Abraham was made, I am," He said one day to the Jews, who quite well understood His thought and sought to stone Him as a blasphemer.[38] In His sacerdotal prayer [39] He speaks of the glory which He had with the Father "before the world was." He possesses and exercises an infinite, universal power, of which His miracles were only an imperfect radiation, a power which justified St. Peter's calling Him the "Lord of all." [40] We have considered many of His own words, which attest the existence of divine powers in Him: "All things are delivered to Me by My Father"; [41] "All things whatsoever the Father hath, are mine"; [42] "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth." [43] The Father "hath given all things into His hand." [44] To the great scandal of the Jews, He forgives sins directly; but the power to do so belongs to God alone.[45] He knows and declares

[36] John 10:30.
[37] John 1:1–4, 10, 14, 18.
[38] John 8:58 f.
[39] John 17:5. Cf. John 1:30, where the precursor refers to this attribute.
[40] Acts 10:36.
[41] Luke 10:22.
[42] John 16:15.
[43] Matt. 28:18.
[44] John 3:35.
[45] Matt. 9:2–6; Luke 7:48–50; 23:43.

that at the end of the world He will preside at the general judgment and will pronounce a decisive and final sentence upon every man.[46] What is to be said of His power as founder of the Church, that mustard seed which, thanks to Him, has become a mighty tree whose branches spread over the whole earth? Must He not possess a divine nature to undertake, establish, and maintain such a work? And what is to be said of what He demands of His disciples? What sacrifices He required of them, and still requires! At times He required an immediate renunciation of all that was most dear and most sacred.[47] No devotedness seemed to Him too great for His cause and that of the Messianic kingdom. On one occasion He said: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me. Every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be My disciples." [48] He is aware of His absolute rights. He makes Himself the center of the religion which He founds. He claims to exercise complete hegemony over the moral man.[49] By a word He transforms or abrogates the Law and the explanations which the Scribes had given it.[50] He declares that His commandments will produce perpetual effects.[51] All these things He says with as much assurance and conviction as though there were question of natural and undeniable prerogatives. It is a really divine authority that He thus attributes to Himself; and His exercise of it shows that He possessed it, that He was God.

We have repeatedly witnessed His infinite knowledge, which was revealed in so many ways, enabling Him to see and to know thoroughly what took place in God, in men, and in

[46] Matt. 25:31–46; Mark 8:38; John 5:27–29, etc.
[47] Matt. 4:19, 21; 8:22; 9:9; 19:21, etc.
[48] Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:33, etc.
[49] Matt. 16:24–27.
[50] Matt. 5:3–10; Luke 6:20–26; 19:3–9, etc.
[51] Matt. 24:35.

nature, in the past, present, and future.[52] In Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," as St. Paul says.[53] His prophecy regarding His second coming reveals the knowledge of a God-Man.

His perfect holiness, His freedom from all sin, His impeccability, mentioned in various passages of the Gospels, not to speak of the other books of the New Testament, lead us to the same conclusion; for it is not possible for a simple mortal to possess the prerogatives to such a degree. "Which of you shall convince Me of sin?" [54] This proud challenge, which He one day offered to His enemies, was not accepted by any of them, so completely was His conduct above reproach. On a later occasion Jesus said to His Apostles: "The prince of this world [Satan] cometh, and in Me he hath not anything." [55] His holiness was not merely negative, it was positive, for it was a compound of virtues and perfections that can belong only to God. Therefore in Him the Father was well pleased, as with a Son worthy of Him, holy like Himself. Those who lived with Jesus and knew Him well were constantly impressed by that holiness, and more than once gave testimony to it.[56]

With what confidence we have heard Him declare that He is greater than Abraham or Jonas or Solomon, greater than the Temple or the Sabbath or the divine Law itself! [57] He calls Himself "the light of the world," [58] "the way, the truth, and the life." [59] To speak thus was to declare His consciousness of possessing the divine nature. That consciousness He mani-

[52] See also what we have just said *supra* regarding His prophetic office.
[53] Col. 2:3.
[54] John 8:46.
[55] John 14:30.
[56] St. Peter in Acts 3:14, and 1 Pet. 2:22; St. John in 1 John 2:1 f.; 3:5. See also Heb. 4:15; 7:26.
[57] Matt. 5:22, 28, 32, etc.; 12:41 f.; 12:8, etc.
[58] John 8:12; 9:5.
[59] John 14:6.

fested at the age of twelve years, when He said to His mother and His foster-father: "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" [60] That consciousness of His infinite greatness, of His irresistible power, of His unique rôle in the world, of His universal superiority, of His perfect holiness, in a word, of His divinity, is manifested in all His words and acts, in His whole conduct. Always and everywhere, though so simple and modest, He reveals Himself as "the Lord of glory," [61] as the very Son of God.

And now, as we bring this life of Christ to a close, we cast a final look upon His portrait as depicted in the Gospels. That life we have seen, through the veil of its humanity, as a divine life, and we can say with the Apostle Thomas: "My Lord and my God," [62] and with the beloved disciple: "We saw His glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." [63]

[60] Luke 2:49.
[61] See 1 Cor. 2:8.
[62] John 20:28.
[63] John 1:14. A summary of the Rationalist view will be found in Appendix XVI.

APPENDICES

I. The Accounts Peculiar to St. Luke

THE accounts peculiar to St. Luke in this portion of our Lord's life are of the deepest interest to us. But they are an object of mistrust and disfavor to the Rationalists. Auguste Sabatier says that this whole passage "swarms with contradictions and impossibilities." [64] For Reuss it contains "nothing but detached scenes which are evidently connected together in a purely arbitrary manner." [65] Many orthodox Protestant exegetes,[66] who do not at all deny the historical character of the accounts and who, like us, are thankful to St. Luke for having handed them down to us, declare themselves inclined to believe that the Evangelist has arranged the events in a logical rather than a chronological order.

We have no need, at this point, to take up the defense of St. Luke as an honest and genuine historian. We will merely say that no serious reason exists for supposing that, in the Gospel pages we are here considering (Luke 9: 51 to 18: 14), he abandoned the rule which he determined upon at the outset, "to write in order" [67] the life of our Lord, and that he suddenly broke away from that decision. As in other similar instances, there is no difficulty in admitting that he transferred some of the Savior's acts or words so as to bring them closer to other similar deed or words. But that is the case only by

[64] *Essai sur les Sources de la Vie de Jésus,* p. 25.

[65] *Histoire Evangélique, Synopse,* p. 436. De Wette, an earlier critic, speaks of "an amalgam without chronological order."

[66] *E. g.,* Th. Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Lucas,* p. 397.

[67] Luke 1: 3.

way of exception.[68] Although it is true that in all these chapters he is less exact in determining the precise circumstances of time and place, we should not fail to remark that he introduces a large number of episodes by expressions which show he really has in mind a chronological succession of events.[69] Most commentators, ancient and modern, render him full justice in this respect.[70]

II. The Seventy-two Disciples

According to some Rationalist critics, the whole episode of the seventy-two disciples is a "doublet," that is, an erroneous duplication of the Gospel accounts regarding the choosing of the twelve Apostles and the mission they received from Christ to evangelize Galilee for a few weeks.[71] But this assertion is refuted by St. Luke, who makes a clear-cut distinction between the two events. At the beginning of the second of these narratives he writes, "the Lord appointed also other seventy-two [disciples]," thus evidently alluding to the institution of the College of the Twelve, previous to that of the College of the Seventy-two. A tradition, which is at least as early as the beginning of the second century, clearly supposes the existence, quite separately, of the group of the seventy-two in the latter days of our Lord's life. Objection is made on the ground of the resemblances in the words addressed to the two groups. These resemblances are real, but they were inevitable.

[68] For example, when, in one part of his Gospel, he relates an incident which is given a different chronological place in the other Synoptics. But even then it is not always certain that the change in the chronological setting was made by him. And we are sure that some details of the Savior's life may have been repeated several times.

[69] Cf. Luke 9:28; 10:1; 11:37, 53; 13:1, 31; 16:14; 19:1, 11, 28.

[70] See Wieseler, *Chronologische Synopse*, pp. 316–332, and *Beiträge zur richtigen Erklärung der Evangelien*, 2d ed., pp. 127–133; Knabenbauer, *Comment. in Evang. S. Lucae*, p. 21.

[71] Matt. 10:1–15; Mark 3:13–19; 6:7–11; Luke 6:12–16; 9:1–5.

"In both cases the mission has a common purpose and takes place under analogous circumstances. The repetition is, therefore, not surprising." [72] Like the Apostles, the seventy-two disciples were to announce the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven, in the same terms and under the same conditions. But the differences are even more numerous than the resemblances, and could hardly be otherwise, since, as we have said, the seventy-two formed what was essentially a transient group. Thus Christ speaks to them only of their present function, not of what awaits them in the future or of what they will have to do later. Furthermore, some of His admonitions are special to them and had not been made to the Apostles.[73] Hence there is not the least reason for confusing or amalgamating the two episodes. That is done for the sole purpose of casting discredit upon the Evangelists and their narratives.

III. Two Contested Passages: Matt. 11:27 and Luke 10:21–22

The Rationalists find themselves extremely embarrassed by these words of our Lord: "All things are delivered to Me by My Father. And no one knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither doth anyone know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him." Hence, to rid themselves of this text, most of them resort to their usual method of uncritical violence. Renan called it "a tardy intercalation." Following him, Albert Réville [74] attributes it "to the influence of a later theology." Its basis must have been a personal confidence made by the Savior to His disciples in the following terms: "Only God reads the depth of My heart; and I alone know God." This statement, passing from mouth

[72] E. Reuss, *Histoire Évangélique, Synopse*, p. 442.
[73] See especially Luke 10:2, 8.
[74] *Histoire du Dogme de la Divinité de Jésus-Christ*, p. 17.

to mouth, was expanded and developed in an unwarranted manner and became what we now read in the accounts of St. Matthew and St. Luke.

Is textual criticism unfavorable to these texts? Not at all. In some of our earliest ecclesiastical writers [75] the order of the clauses is inverted, and we read: "No one knoweth the Father, but the Son; neither doth anyone know the Son, but the Father." But this proves nothing; the thought is not altered in the slightest.[76] Our text is theologically pregnant and attests a genuine solidarity between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics.[77] Those who would rid themselves of it at all costs, say that it resembles certain lines of Ecclesiasticus.[78] This likeness, however, is too vague and general to serve as proof; [79] and why could not Christ, in setting forth His thought, have made use of a few words taken from Holy Writ? [80]

So weak is the Rationalist contention, in this matter particularly, that many critics have abandoned it. One of them says: "There is absolutely no reason for denying that these incomparable words are words of Jesus." [81] Therefore, in the matter of this passage, "it is impossible upon any principles of criticism to question its genuineness." [82] It has been truly called "a pearl of the Gospel of Jesus." [83]

Some Liberal theologians fall into another error regarding

[75] St. Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 100; *Apol.*, I, 63; St. Irenaeus, *Haer.*, I, xii, 2; IV, vi, 1; Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, II, 27; iv, 25; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.*, VII, 18, etc.

[76] This inverted order, which is not sanctioned by the great mass of manuscripts and versions, was made later, because it was thought more logical and more respectful to God the Father.

[77] Cf. John 3:35; 6:46; 8:19; 10:15, 30; 14:9; 16:15; 17:6, 10, etc.

[78] Cf. Ecclu. 51:1, 23, 26, 27, in the Greek text.

[79] Burkitt, *The Gospel History*, pp. 199, 206.

[80] Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*, p. 435.

[81] J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des N. T.*, I, 301. See also Keim, *Geschichte Jesu von Nazara*, II, 385; Schmiedel in Cheyne's *Encyclop. Biblica*, IV, col. 4697.

[82] Plummer, *Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Luke*, p. 282. Cf. Sanday, *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 109.

[83] Keim, *op. cit.*, p. 378.

these words of Christ, minimizing their import as much as possible, as though they referred simply to Christ's special knowledge of God, but not to His participation in the divine nature.[84] The text itself, however, is clear and precise, and does not admit of such an interpretation. It plainly attributes to Jesus the essence and almighty power of God Himself, The Christology which it sums up, entirely covers that of St. John, including the idea of the eternal preëxistence.[85]

IV. The Raising of Lazarus

In *Les Miracles de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ* we have devoted several pages to the Rationalist attacks upon the miracle of the raising af Lazarus.[86] Here we will simply present a summary of those pages.

The exceptional importance of this miracle was seen by Spinoza, one of the fathers of modern Rationalism, who had so large a share in shaking the foundations of supernatural belief. We are told by Bayle [87] that Spinoza declared, "if he could have been convinced of the raising of Lazarus, he would have demolished his whole system and would have had no hesitation in embracing the ordinary faith of Christians." Precisely because of its particular importance, the miracle at Bethania is attacked by all unbelievers, nowadays more than ever before. But, in the words of Reuss, who is himself strongly imbued with Rationalism, "it must be acknowledged that all attempts to set aside this miracle are arbitrary." [88]

[84] Cf. J. Weiss, *Schriften des N. T.*, I, 298.

[85] Sanday, *loc. cit.* See Schumacher, *Die Selbstoffenbarung Jesu bei Matth.*, 11 : 27.

[86] Vol. II, pp. 378–392. See also Godet, *Commentaire sur l'Évangile de S. Jean*, 2d ed., II, 237–246; F. Keil, *Commentar über das Evangelium des Johannes*, pp. 395–401; Tillmann, *Die heiligen Schriften des N. T.*, II, 181–184; and especially Lepin, *La Valeur Historique du IV^e Évangile*, I, 106–178 (an excellent work written in refutation of Loisy's theories).

[87] *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique*, 1740, IV, 964, note.

[88] *La Théologie Johannique*, p. 251.

The truth of this statement becomes the more evident when we consider the methods by which the Rationalist critics endeavor to eliminate that page from the Fourth Gospel. Their procedure is full of weaknesses, improbabilities, contradictions, and, to use the expression of a Protestant commentator,[89] exegetical "monstrosities." To mention them is enough to condemn them.

a) Of the arguments of our adversaries, there is only one that has any semblance of worth, and that argument is merely negative, deduced from the silence of the first three Gospels, which may easily "be neutralized by consideration of the many lacunae to be found in the narratives of the Synoptics." [90] Matthew, Mark, and Luke almost entirely omit those events of the Savior's life that have no relation with His Galilean ministry; they show us Christ at Jerusalem during the last week of His life. John, on the contrary, describes Christ's ministry especially at Jerusalem and in Judea and to a considerable extent omits the other events. In both cases the choice of the narratives was determined by the Evangelist's aim and plan. The silence of the Synoptics about the raising of Lazarus proves nothing more against the truthfulness of the Fourth Gospel than does St. John's silence against the truth of the resurrections related by the Synoptics and omitted by him.

b) The Rationalists maintain that Lazarus' death was only apparent. Against this interpretation, the Gospel account offers so many proofs that even Strauss [91] regards such an explanation as a mad notion. He says that we must either consider the incident as supernatural or wholly deny the historical nature of the account;—he does the latter according to his practice; but the theory of apparent death has no place in this

[89] Keil, *op. cit.*, p. 356.
[90] Reuss, *op. cit.*, p. 251.
[91] *Life of Jesus*, II, 213–237.

episode. An eminent contemporary physician writes apropos of this subject: "So complete a lethargy develops only gradually. . . . We must, therefore, admit that Lazarus remained in his house without taking food for a considerable number of days. And if we consider further that, for several days afterward, he remained wrapped in burial cloths and enclosed in a tomb, it is certain that this would have brought about his death. At Christ's summons, he comes forth alive and is so completely cured that the Pharisees wish to put him to death, because he is a witness who is likely to be a hindrance to their designs. No lethargy is cured in that way, suddenly changing to excellent health, supposing it to be merely a phase of a serious mental ailment, which lasts for some time with a succession of ups and downs, and in any event obtains only an incomplete cure." [92]

c) Strauss contends that the author of the Fourth Gospel relates this so-called miracle for the sole purpose of developing the words, "I am the resurrection and the life," by means of details taken from the two instances of raising the dead which we read in the Synoptic Gospels. In short, the whole incident is nothing more than a story made up by the Evangelist. Other Rationalists, however, almost as extreme as Strauss (*v. g.,* Ferdinand Christian Baur and Ernest Renan), thoroughly refute him by showing that not the least trace of a myth exists in the story of the raising of Lazarus.

d) To the objection that the gospel account of this miracle is merely an ideal picture intended to glorify the Savior, we reply that the precision of detail, the clearness, simplicity, and dramatic character of the narrative, the obvious truthfulness of the part assigned to Christ and the other persons, whether friends or foes, and the results that were effected by the miracle, all are set forth as genuine history and cannot be given any other interpretation.

[92] Knur, *Christus Medicus?* p. 73.

e) Renan went so far as to accuse the Savior's disciples of having been the instigators and participants in "a pious fraud" for the purpose of putting an end to the unbelief of the people of Jerusalem. Therefore Lazarus agreed to pretend he was dead and to allow himself to be shut up in a tomb, from which it was a simple matter for Christ to bring him forth alive. The Savior, he says, was aware of this deceit and became a party to it. Even Strauss became indignant upon reading Renan's attack.[93]

f) According to some modern critics, the pretended resurrection at Bethania was a mere translation into deeds of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, a translation unintentionally made as the result of a whole series of accumulated misunderstandings.[94] But no proofs are given for this transformation. It is a purely arbitrary hypothesis. Between the parable and the miracle there is only one point of contact, the name of "Lazarus." All the rest is utterly unlike. It is impossible to see how the parable told by our Lord could have become the great miracle performed by Him at Bethania.

g) It is alleged that the story is loaded with "an overwhelming number of internal difficulties and impossibilities." [95] The critics affect to be scandalized by the Savior's tears and emotion, which, they say, contradict the character assigned to the Christ-Logos in the Fourth Gospel.[96] The tender words which Christ addressed to His heavenly Father before the miracle, they call "a prayer of ostentation." [97] The critics regard as an unfavorable sign the Evangelist's silence about the acts of Lazarus after his resurrection. The weight-

[93] *Life of Jesus,* II, 234.

[94] This opinion is quite popular at present. Among those who hold it are O. Holtzmann, *Life of Jesus,* p. 275; A. Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth,* I, 345; Loisy, *Le Quatrième Évangile,* pp. 634, 657.

[95] Heitmüller, *Die Schriften des N. T.,* II, 268; O. Holtzmann, *op. cit.,* p. 159.

[96] Loisy, *Le Quatrième Évangile,* 558.

[97] "He prays for form's sake," says Loisy, *ibid.*

iest exegetes, on the contrary, consider this very silence as a mark of veracity. So greatly do the Rationalists wish to deprive this striking miracle of its force, that they raise the most futile objections with regard to every smallest detail. But their attempt is fruitless: they have merely succeeded in demonstrating the weakness and falsity of a critique that is forced to resort to such means to establish its position.

V. Christ's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

The Rationalists recognize the importance of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, an event unique in His life. Although they do not deny the historicity of the episode—it would be impossible to do so—they strive in various ways to lessen its import and effect.

1. The slight divergences to be observed in the four accounts they interpret as contradictions, or at least as additions. For instance, we are told by W. Bauer [98] that, according to the Synoptics, after Jesus left Jericho, "He did not stop in any village, but went directly to the capital. But, according to St. John, He spent the night at Bethania and did not make His appearance in Jerusalem until the next day. Whence follow other divergences. According to the Synoptics, the triumphal procession set out from Bethania and escorted Jesus to the metropolis; according to John, the procession set out from Jerusalem to meet the Savior at Bethania."—We have already shown that there is no more contradiction here than in the secondary details of the account, which we need not specify here. In this, as in other instances, the Evangelists supplement one another; hence, the variants to be found in their narratives. In no respect do they contradict each other. If the starting-place of the procession is not the same in St. John's Gospel as in the Synoptics, that is because they take

[98] *Das Leben Jesu im Zeitalter der neutestam. Apokryphen*, p. 155.

different points of view. St. John follows the multitude going from Jerusalem to Bethania to lead Christ to the capital; the Synoptics accompany the triumphant Savior from the humble village to Jerusalem. They are both right, since there were two distinct processions which met on the road. By these examples we see how mistaken Rationalist criticism is in thus attempting to set up one of the sacred writers against the others. In the case of all ancient historians who wrote the life of one and the same person, there are divergences of this sort; and history is the gainer thereby, because in this way it is enriched with additional details. Why should we be more exacting in the case of the Evangelists than of profane authors? But the bias of Liberal Protestants is unlimited. One of them[99] says: "The green straw (the στιβάδες mentioned by Mark 12:8) or reed was displeasing to the later Evangelists. Luke 19:36 simply leaves it out. Matthew 20:8 converts it into branches of trees; while John 12:13 thinks to do justice to the dignity of Jesus by making the people of Jerusalem come out of the city to meet Him, carrying palm branches in their hands. This, however, is a later embellishment." But this is not so; the historical truth is set forth in the four accounts, with variants corresponding to distinct facts.

2. A more serious objection concerns the prophecy of Zacharias recorded in St. Matthew's Gospel. The author of the First Gospel, we are told,[100] "in his zeal to show that the prophecies were literally fulfilled in Christ, did not see that the text from Zacharias 9:9 . . . is subject to the poetic law of parallelism, by virtue of which the second verse repeats the idea set forth in the first. The prophet speaks of a single animal; the Evangelist thought he indicated two and, differing in this detail from the other Synoptics, he has Christ sit

[99] O. Holtzmann, *Life of Jesus*, p. 404.
[100] A. Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 267–268, note 2.

upon an ass and its colt." Loisy [101] charges St. Matthew with having "doubled" the animal on which our Lord rode. The charge is unjust. It is, indeed, likely that the prophet Zacharias alludes to only one animal. But where does it appear that the Evangelist invented a second, the ass, to make Christ's fulfilment of the prophecy more striking? If he introduces two animals into his account, that was because there were two, although our Lord sat only upon one. And when, following Strauss, it is said further, by way of ridiculing the account, that "Matthew says that Christ sat upon the two animals," [102] which is a material impossibility,[103] the Evangelist is credited with a stupidity that he did not commit. In the words ἐπεκάθισεν ἐπ' αὐτῶν, "He sat on them," the pronoun "them" very clearly refers to the garments placed upon the ass and the colt, and not to the two animals.

3. According to Wellhausen and Dalman,[104] the triumphal entry had no Messianic character; it was only later that Christianity, and consequently the Evangelists, took this view of it, to enhance the person of Jesus. This assertion is altogether gratuitous, like a great many other statements of the Rationalists, attributing to the "faith of the primitive Church" numberless like inventions, made, we are told, with a view to glorifying Him whom it regarded as the Savior.[105] Other authors of the same school "suppose that Jesus had provoked this manifestation with the design of winning the Messianic sovereignty." [106] The Protestant theologian from whom we take the statement of this objection, at once refutes

[101] *Les Évangiles Synoptiques,* II, 263.

[102] Indeed! Albert Réville, in the words we have just quoted from his book, makes the same hypothesis.

[103] Loisy, *loc. cit.*

[104] Wellhausen, *Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte,* 3d ed., p. 381, note 2; Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu,* p. 182.

[105] See Vol. I, pp. 501 f., 527.

[106] A thoroughly ambitious idea.

it [107] in the following words: "On this supposition, Christ's ideal would not have notably surpassed that of Judas the Gaulonite or of Bar Kochba. But, if it be admitted that He really purposed restoring the throne of David, how lacking in discernment it was for Him to imagine . . . that He would not only be victorious over inveterate prejudices and rescue His people from the domination of the Sadducees [and Pharisees], but victoriously oppose the might of Rome. The failure of such an undertaking would throw conspicuous discredit upon the prestige of its author." The hypothesis here suggested so utterly disagrees with Christ's whole life that it does not deserve a more lengthy refutation.

4. The Gospels, especially the Synoptics, relate that the Savior Himself took the initiative in the triumphal entry. But, we are told, this could not have been. Up to then, He had most scrupulously avoided taking or accepting publicly the title of Messias. Are we, then, to believe that He suddenly furnished to crowds that He knew were so easily inflamed, the occasion for making such a manifestation in His favor? Moreover, in the Savior's trial, there is no question of this undertaking, which His foes would certainly have used against Him if it were true. Thus argues J. Weiss.[108] But he forgets that, although Christ up to that day had opposed any inopportune and anticipated proclamation of His Messianic office, He had weighty reasons for so doing. These reasons we have referred to again and again. But in the present juncture, they ceased to exist, and it was proper, nay, even necessary, that at least once before His approaching death, which would outwardly seem a complete defeat, He should present Himself, in an official and unquestionable manner, as the promised and expected Messias. It was this presentation that took place on Palm Sunday. He could not depart without openly showing to

[107] Monnier, *La Mission Historique de Jésus*, pp. 265 f.
[108] *Die Schriften des N. T.*, I, 163.

His disciples and friends, and to the multitudes that believed more or less in Him, and even to His enemies, what He claimed to be. He was too loyal to decline so important a duty. The argument based on the silence of Christ's enemies during His trial is valueless, because the members of the Sanhedrin did accuse Him, saying: "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place [Jerusalem]." [109] These words may contain an allusion to the triumphal entry.

5. Attacks are made upon the Savior's prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem. We are told that it is so precise and detailed and agrees so fully with what really happened at the time of the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans,[110] that it must have been formulated after the event and Christ, therefore, cannot have been its author. To this we reply that, notwithstanding the biased negations by those who reject the supernatural, the Savior possessed a gift of foreknowledge and prophecy of which many proofs are to be found in the four Gospels. Despite the wonderfully exact details of His prophecy, the prediction of the evils soon to fall upon Jerusalem was not made *ex eventu*. And if "it cannot be denied that the destruction of Jerusalem was foreseen and foretold by Christ, does not this imply His prevision of the siege, and is it not evident that all the detailed features of the picture must have presented themselves to His mind? We know that Christ was wont to individualize an idea by the most concrete details of its fulfilment." [111] But the striking coincidence existing between the prophecy and its fulfilment is not at all fortuitous. Jesus foresaw all and knew all, as we shall have occasion to remark again later on in connection with His eschatological discourse.

[109] Luke 23:5.
[110] Cf. Josephus, *Bell. Iud.*, V, vi, 2, and xii, 2.
[111] Godet, *Commentaire sur l'Évangile de S. Luc*, 2d ed., II, 292.

VI. The Cursing of the Fig Tree

The so-called "Critical" school well-nigh unanimously refuses to understand this miracle, and therefore rejects its historical character, affecting even to be scandalized. E.Reuss says: "The story of the fig tree is an insoluble enigma. . . . What purpose could such a miracle have? We do not comprehend Jesus' outburst against a soulless, and hence irresponsible, thing." [112] Others consider it an act of anger and vengeance, or at least an act "lacking reasons," [113] and therefore showing an absence of honorable conduct. Many Rationalist critics, however, are not willing to attribute such unworthiness to the Savior, "who cannot be attacked from the moral point of view." [114] Still others endeavor to interpret the incident in a way favorable to their thesis: "The whole episode reveals the human side of Jesus. He is hungry; He makes a mistake; He curses a tree." Attempting to discover the hidden motive for such an act, they conclude that "it may be that Jesus was not satisfied with the meagre success which had attended His entry into the city the day before." [115]

The cursing of the fig tree is then relegated to the domain of legend,[116] or it is regarded as a "misunderstanding by tradition," which transformed into a miraculous act what was merely some discourse or saying of Christ, especially the par-

[112] *Histoire Évangélique, Synopse,* p. 557.

[113] Loisy, *Les Évangiles Synoptiques,* II, 286.

[114] Schwartzkopff, *Konnte Jesus irren?* p. 7.

[115] O. Holtzmann, *Life of Jesus,* p. 412. We will not discuss the last-mentioned detail. It is difficult to consider the triumphal entry as a "meagre success."

[116] To explain the origin of such a legend, the critics, in all seriousness, resort to the following hypothesis: On the road between Bethania and Jerusalem, "perhaps there was a withered fig tree which engaged the popular imagination [in the early Church], and of which it was said: This is the tree that Jesus cursed." J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des N. T.,* I, 165. E. Schwartz even takes the trouble to prove the reality of this curious conjecture. *Zeitschrift für neutestam. Wissenschaft,* 1904, V, 80–85.

able of the fig tree, which bears a considerable resemblance to the episode we are here considering. But there exists no trace of this alleged transformation of the parable into a miracle. On the contrary, there is a notable difference between the two. In fact, "the point of the parable consists in the granting of a delay to the barren fig tree, whereas the point of the present account consists in the fact that divine judgment strikes the tree without delay." [117]

This miracle is the only one of its kind in our Lord's life, and the critics are not the first to be astonished at it. St. Augustine says: "What had the tree done? What was the tree's fault?" [118] Following the usual interpretation of Christian exegetes, we must look beyond the tree and see in Christ's act a symbol. The significance of this symbolic act we have already explained.[119] We may here add that the fig tree was cursed, not only because it was barren, but also because it was an emblem of hypocrisy and falsehood, since, considering the usual conditions of its fruit-bearing, its abundant foliage seemed to indicate that it was well laden with fruit.[120] In so far as it was a symbol of the moral and religious conduct of the Jewish people, this tree was a deceiver and for that reason was condemned, like those whom it typified. But it is gratuitously unjust to accuse the Divine Master of giving way to anger and vengeance on this occasion. His condemnation was uttered with all the calmness and dignity befitting an impartial judge. A Protestant commentator makes this delicate and correct remark: "This death blow is the only one dealt by the Savior's merciful hands; indeed it was wrung from His heart during the last days of His stay among them in the hope of striking their stubborn

[117] B. Weiss, *Leben Jesu*, II, 458. The opinion which Weiss refutes is still current among Rationalists and Liberal Protestants.

[118] *De Verbis Domini in Joan.*, 44.

[119] Page 252.

[120] Plummer, *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew*, p. 291.

souls with a holy fear of God; and even here the tender mercies of His heart warded off the blow, moving Him still to spare mankind, and in their stead simply sacrifice an insensible object of His own handiwork." [121]

It is well to note that, during the days just preceding His Passion, our Lord had constantly in His mind, and especially in His heart, the divine judgment which threatened the Jews on account of their lamentable moral condition. He would have greatly desired to lead them back to a better disposition. The parable of the two sons and that of the wicked husbandmen show this clearly, as do other threats which He made at that time. The verdant but barren fig tree was therefore a natural occasion to foretell, by an extraordinary act, the punishment in store for the guilty nation.

VII. The Driving Out of the Sellers from the Temple

A few Rationalist critics express a more or less direct and unfriendly opinion of this incident. Keim,[122] though not altogether disapproving of it, regrets that, in expelling the sellers from the Temple, Christ is no longer recognizable as "the Son of Man of Galilee," who was milder, and calmer, and more considerate. He says that the Jesus of the two episodes makes "a severe, somber, and frightening impression." And His personality is not the same, because "He acted outside His customary sphere." That extraordinary deed was "a matter of small importance" which would bring about His destruction. Albert Réville voices the same view: [123] "Taking everything into account, we think that, despite the uprightness of intention and all that was praiseworthy in the results obtained, the purification of the Temple is, of all Christ's acts,

[121] Quoted by Fouard, *The Christ the Son of God*, II, 172.
[122] *Geschichte Jesu von Nazara*, II, 101.
[123] *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 279.

the one that most nearly approaches a repudiation inflicted by Him upon His own principles. . . . It cannot be denied that material violence was used; but Jesus had always refused to resort to that dangerous means." Hence, in driving out the sellers and money-changers, He put Himself in contradiction with His own principles. And "He must have felt that He had been at the very limit of His legitimate powers, if indeed He had not exceeded them." [124]

These critics presume to condemn the Divine Master's conduct with an air of superior judgment and deny His right to act in such or such a way in the fulness of His power. But other critics there are, of sounder judgment, who, in this matter, are at one with Christian interpreters in their respectful approval of our Lord's conduct, His "noble indignation," and His "courageous energy." [125] And we may also draw attention to the "passive silence" of those whom the Savior struck and drove out, to the silence of the priests whose function it was to police the Temple, and to the admiration of the multitude witnessing this act of vindication. Lastly we note the expressive words of the disciples, [126] who regarded Christ's conduct as a mark of zeal for the house of God, and His own words, which show that He considered He had not only the strict right, but also the filial duty of safeguarding the honor of His Father's house.

VIII. Christ, the Son of David

Following the Rationalists of the nineteenth century (*e. g.*, Strauss, Renan, Schenkel), several modern critics maintain that in our Lord's brief reasoning on the first line of Psalm 109, He meant to repudiate any claim to a Davidic descent, so

[124] *Ibid.*, p. 280.
[125] E. Reuss, *Histoire Évangélique*, p. 556.
[126] John 2: 17.

far as it concerned His own person. And we are told that He did not consider such descent as essential for the Messias. One of the critics says that, in the passage we are here considering, "Jesus does not claim to be a son of David, who, by virtue of his legitimate descent, will ascend the throne of his fathers." [127] "Stripped of theological subtlety, Christ's discourse means that He has no need to be the son of David, and that His office comes from a higher source." [128] This last statement is quite correct. Our Lord's chief purpose, when questioning the Pharisees on the text "The Lord said to my Lord," was to show that the Messias must have an origin much higher than Davidic sonship could have procured for Him. But it is a very faulty interpretation of His thought to say that He criticized as untrue the unanimous belief of the Jews that the Christ would be a descendant of David—a belief resting on very clear prophecies. He did criticize that belief, but solely because it was incomplete and did not place that eminent personage high enough; for, as the prophets had said, the Christ was to be infinitely higher than David, since He would be the true Son of God. It was important, therefore, that one should not stop short at this title, royal and glorious though it was; for it was infinitely beneath the reality and gave but a dim notion of the Redeemer's transcendent nature. To suppose that Jesus could have claimed the office of Messias without belonging to the family of David, we would have to ignore the entire history of Israel and to take no account of the quite legitimate belief, especially deep-rooted at that time, that the first condition to be satisfied by

[127] J. Weiss, *Schriften des N. T.*, I, 175.

[128] Loisy, *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, II, 369. Likewise Albert Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 303: We have here "Jesus' own declaration that He did not consider Himself a descendant of David." Nevertheless "in His own mind that was no reason for giving up the idea of some day being accepted as the Messias. . . . Jesus' reasoning amounts to saying that the Christ *cannot* be the Messias." The italics are the author's. Cf. W. Schmidt, *Die Geschichte Jesu erzählt*, p. 157; Spitta, *Streitfragen der Geschichte Jesu*, pp. 144–172, etc.

the Messias was to prove that he was really descended from David. In a previous volume of this work [129] we proved, by the help of the Gospels and of the earliest Christian tradition, that this fact is undeniable with regard to our Lord.

IX. The Eschatological Discourse

1. Objection is made to the authenticity of this beautiful discourse. But the theory of the Rationalists is weakened by the fact that they are not in full accord on this point. Although early Rationalism generally regarded the discourse as a fabrication from end to end, the leaders of the new school are willing to attribute a considerable part of it to Christ, whilst, following their usual method, they would suppress what does not suit them. As in all similar cases, the reasons for that total or partial suppression are purely subjective and arbitrary. It is not possible to attack, *in toto* or in detail, the genuineness of a text that has been handed down to us in an almost identical form by three most conscientious contemporary historians—a text that is to be found, excellently preserved, in all the ancient manuscripts, all the versions, and many other documents.

J. Weiss [130] objects that "some parts of this discourse have nothing specifically Christian in them." We may reply that the Rationalist critics can hardly be accepted as good judges in this matter, since their minds are so filled with anti-Christian prejudice. Another point of attack is found by Albert Réville, a modern Rationalist who denies the authenticity of the discourse. He says that Jesus "during His earthly life clearly repudiated this violent and theatrical Messiaship," which is so conspicuous in the discourse. If the text, as we

[129] Vol. I, pp. 310–325, 590–595.
[130] *Die Schriften des N. T.*, I, 177.

read it in the Second Gospel,[131] were a true report of Christ's words, we would have to suppose that, "in a rapturous dream of greatness, He contemplated Himself in advance with the features of a celestial emperor coming to inaugurate His dominion over all the kingdoms of the earth and over all their glory. . . . Having begun by announcing the essential religion, drawn from the very conscience of religious humanity, . . . He would have ended with a Utopian dream." [132] Rather than accept a Jesus so sadly degraded, they prefer to disregard textual criticism and its rules and deny the possibility of His having delivered this discourse. Who then made it up? In the hope that their Christ and Lord would return to them after His (so-called) Resurrection, the first Christians "must have applied the usual apocalyptical methods to the idea of that expected return and of all that would precede it." [133]

The suggestion of an apocalyptical adornment makes the question more precise. In the words of J. Weiss, "many authors admit that Mark [134] in this passage made use of a prophetic writing of that sort." [135] According to several writers to whom Weiss refers, Mark must have done more than merely utilize it, for they say that this "little apocalypse," this "synoptic apocalypse," as they call it, was, so to speak, a loose leaf which the author of the Second Gospel inserted at this place in his narrative. From the way they speak, you might suppose they were in possession of it; they even give us a reproduction of it by itself, eliminating the

[131] When the Rationalist critics discuss the eschatological discourse, they use chiefly St. Mark's account, because of the special authority which they attribute to that Gospel.

[132] *Jésus de Nazareth,* II, 316. This passage is followed by several pages of similar developments.

[133] *Ibid.,* p. 321.

[134] And likewise the other Synoptics.

[135] *Loc. cit.*

details which they say were superadded.[136] Yet, in the ranks of the protagonists of this hypothesis, there is disagreement, some maintaining that the synoptic apocalypse is of strictly Jewish origin, while a larger group considers it to be fundamentally Jewish, but transformed by more or less extensive Christian revisions.[137] The same hesitations or contradictions appear with regard to its original extent. Some declare that "it is hard to say where it begins and where it ends," [138] and that "it is impossible to separate what is authentic from what is not." [139]

Of all this, no positive proof is offered. The critics merely allege a resemblance in form and imagery between the discourse and the apocalyptical literature of Judaism. No one denies the presence of this likeness. But it is sufficiently explained by our Lord's habit of using the language of His time, especially when speaking of the "last things," to be better understood by His countrymen. We have already called attention to the vast difference between His descriptions, which are restrained, even though eloquent, and the unconfined, extravagant content of the Jewish apocalypses. For this reason voices are raised in the critical school as well as in orthodox Protestant ranks against the hypothesis, which takes no account of the originality of the Savior's teaching in this matter as on other subjects, or of the moral impossibility of a composition of that sort being introduced into the Gospels as the genuine teaching of the Savior. Jesus was "eschatological," as the Rationalists say; [140] and even outside

[136] See J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des N. T.*, I, 178, 180, 182.

[137] See Keim, *Jesus von Nazara*, II, 200–206; H. J. Holtzmann, *Die Synoptiker*, 3d ed., p. 96; Erich Klostermann, *Markus*, p. 111; J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des N. T.*, I, 178 ff.; Schmidt, *Geschichte Jesu erläutert*, p. 356; Haupt, *Die eschatologischen Aussagen Jesu in den synoptischen Evangelien.*

[138] H. J. Holtzmann, *loc. cit.*

[139] A. Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 318.

[140] Especially Albert Schweitzer, in *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*, pp. 347–395. Henri Monnier, *La Mission Historique de Jésus*, says (p. 520): "It is not hard to

the discourse we are now considering,[141] He set forth a remarkable and admirable teaching about the end of the world. But at the same time He kept His independence in ideas and aim, and raised to a high plane this subject which the Jewish apocalypses had helped to lower.[142]

2. Some critics who, to a greater or less extent, admit the authenticity of the eschatological discourse, draw from it the conclusion that if Jesus really did pronounce it, He fell into serious errors, whence it follows that He was certainly not the Messias.

Let us consider only the main points of the charge. The chief criticism of our Lord—on the supposition that He was the author of this discourse—is that He fell into a gross error about the imminence of His kingdom, which He associates with the destruction of Jerusalem and the cosmic disturbances at the end of the world. Albert Réville[143] says: "In the face of this evidence, the whole teaching clearly presupposes the nearness of those events which must be fulfilled before the passing of the generation to which Christ Himself belonged. By stretching the point a little, the length of that generation might be extended to the end of the century. Yet those predictions were evidently erroneous. . . . If Christ said what the Gospels attribute to Him, He was seriously mistaken in His expectation." According to Loisy,[144] our Lord gave a strictly eschatological meaning to the kingdom that He announced from the very outset of His ministry, being convinced that He would inaugurate the final period of the world. In that case, Christ was confident that this king-

recognize that Jesus was brought up in an atmosphere where apocalyptical notions were common." The impression which they made upon His mind never left Him, "although, in the crucible of His genius, He recast the heterogeneous notions that haunted the minds of His countrymen."

[141] Cf. Matt. 7:21–23; 19:28; 25:31–46; 26:61–64; Luke 13:23–27, etc.

[142] See Fillion, *Les Étapes du Rationalisme*, pp. 275–287.

[143] *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 314.

[144] *L'Evangile et l'Église, passim; Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, I, 236, 247, etc.

dom would be realized in His lifetime; it was with this confidence He undertook His last journey to Jerusalem, in the belief that He was going to witness the definitive establishment of the Messianic reign.[145]

The Rationalist interpretation is false. Jesus did not fall into those errors. A careful reading of the eschatological discourse proves this. The mistake is made by those who place in the Savior's mind and on His lips views that were never His. He was far from confusing the destruction of Jerusalem with His second coming, two events which He separated and distinguished from each other with perfect clearness. First there will be, He said, signs as portents of the destruction of the Holy City; then a sign that will immediately precede that catastrophe; finally, there will come the divine judgment against the guilty city. Following that will come other forebodings and cosmic disturbances that will upset the world; only then will the Messias make His glorious reappearance. In the near future will take place the ruin of Jerusalem and of the Jewish State, of which Jerusalem was the capital and symbol. The second coming of the Messias will occur later, much later, as the Divine Master again and again intimated during the closing days of His life.[146] Christ, therefore, did not place the destruction of Jerusalem, His coming, and the end of the world, on one and the same plane, but only the last two events. At first glance, it all seems to form, so to speak, a single block; but this is because our Lord

[145] Oscar Holtzmann is more restrained. He says: "Jesus warns His hearers to be continually on the lookout for the coming Messias. This presupposes, of course, that the Messias may not appear for some time. Had Jesus taken into account the centuries, and even thousands of years . . . He would not have announced that the Kingdom of Heaven was nigh at hand." (*Life of Jesus*, p. 176.)

[146] Many Rationalist critics have acknowledged this fact. The bridegroom in the parable of the virgins "is late in coming; this is an indirect proof that Jesus was accustomed to saying that the end would not come as soon as was ordinarily supposed." (E. Reuss, *Synopse Évangélique*, p. 612.)

did not wish to reveal in any way the date of His second coming and the end of the world. But the distinction in time is evident, especially now that the part referring to Jerusalem has been fulfilled. We may be sure that the second part also will be accomplished in full.

But, after briefly describing His coming at the end of the world, Jesus spoke, according to the three Synoptics,[147] these grave words, which, the critics say, appear to suppose that He considered His second coming as in the near future: "Amen I say to you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done." No doubt the text involves a real difficulty. It is probable that these words of the Savior led many early Christians to believe that He would soon return for the general judgment. But that belief was false, and the responsibility for it does not fall upon our Lord.[148] Evidently He wished a certain mystery to envelop this whole prophecy, so that the period of His second coming might remain hidden. This is why, after having separated the two great events predicted, He seems to group them as if they formed only one event. In the light of all that precedes, we understand the words "this generation" in the present text to have a double meaning, according as they refer to the Jews who will be living at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, or to those inhabitants of the earth who will be living towards the end of the world. Jesus did not mean that His contemporaries would witness His second coming.

After these explanations and distinctions it may be seen how far the Rationalist critics are mistaken when they propose the following with regard to Christ's words: Either He was mistaken, or the text is not authentic. But we have amply

[147] Matt. 24:34; Mark 13:30; Luke 21:32.

[148] It is noteworthy that the early Christians, when they recognized their error on this point, lost absolutely nothing of their faith or confidence in our Lord.

proved [149] that the text *is* genuine and that Christ was *not* mistaken.

One word more about the violent cosmic convulsions that Jesus mentions as the final harbingers of His second coming. By some they are regarded as a veil ornamenting the description, or a symbol of the terrible things that will happen in the last days. Along with most Christian exegetes, both ancient and modern, we believe rather that our Lord intended to set forth a real miracle of destruction and reconstruction, which would change the old world into a new world, worthy of being forever the scene of His kingdom. It would seem "that Jesus did not dissociate Himself from the traditional view that the end [of the world] would come in the form of a catastrophic transformation, culminating in the advent of the Messiah Himself. . . . He seems rather everywhere, both by the assumptions and by the direct references of His language, to set His seal to this view. . . . The tenacity with which He adhered to the catastrophic view of the final event cannot but profoundly impress us." [150] St. Peter, one of the Apostles who heard the discourse, uses the same language when speaking of the end of the world.[151] Shortly before,[152] Jesus designated it by the expressive word παλιγγενεσία (Vulg., *regeneratio*), new birth, regeneration, renewal of the present world—an idea expressed long before by the prophet Isaias.[153]

X. The Institution of the Eucharist

A Protestant theologian, Olshausen,[154] just before taking up the explanation of the words, "This is My body, This is

[149] See Fillion, *Les Étapes du Rationalisme, pp.* 275–287; cf. C. van Crombrugghe, *Les Prétendues Erreurs Eschatologiques de Jésus.*

[150] Muirhead in Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels,* I, 531.

[151] See 2 Peter 3:13. Cf. Apoc. 21:1.

[152] Matt. 19:28.

[153] Is. 65:17; 66:22.

[154] *Commentar über sämtliche Schriften des N. T.,* 3d ed., II, 441.

My blood," says: "Alas! The banquet of love has served, even to our own day, as an occasion for the saddest and most violent polemics that the history of the Church and of doctrine has ever had to record." This remark is as true to-day as it was when first made, although happily the discussion has lost its bitterness. An unparalleled number of articles and books has appeared during the past thirty years, especially in Liberal theological circles, devoted to the study of the Last Supper and the words spoken there.[155] These works make sad reading for a Catholic, but they are of real interest, for they enable us to witness the evolution of Protestant and Rationalist theories about the Eucharist. And it is comforting to see that, however clever and perfidious the new objections may sometimes be, they lose their edge against the firm rock of the sacred narratives. Into the purely doctrinal discussions there is no need for us to enter. It will suffice that we broach the difficulties that directly concern the Gospel texts, their meaning, and the origin attributed to the Eucharist by the Rationalists.

1. The Text.—We have more than once drawn the reader's attention to the liberty, we might almost say the offhandedness, so frequently marking the Liberal theologians' treatment of Biblical texts which contradict their preconceived systems. Not satisfied with handling the texts as they please, they try to get rid of them through an easier and more radical method by denying their authenticity. This is just what many of them have done, contrary to the rules of criticism, in the matter of the Eucharistic formulas, "This is My body," "This is My blood." Yet these words form an integral part of the Synoptic Gospels and of St. Paul's account. Such evidence, however, is not enough for the critics. In this mat-

[155] We will not attempt to give even an abridged list of them. A sufficiently complete list will be found in the little work of W. Koch, already cited: *Das Abendmahl im N. Test.*

ter, we are told, the Apostle of the Gentiles is without authority, because he is the one who invented these words. His disciple, St. Luke, who merely copied him, does not count. Nor does St. Matthew, because he based his account on that of St. Mark. But would not this latter writer avail, who, in the Rationalists' estimation, is the best of the Savior's biographers? No. In his narrative they suppress whatever concerns the Eucharist,[156] and keep only the words: "Amen I say to you, that I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it new in the Kingdom of God." [157] Thus the only thing left in St. Mark's account is the allusion to meals that are to take place soon (at least Jesus imagines so) in the Messianic kingdom.[158] If we protest that all the early documents contain the texts thus violently mistreated, we are referred to the Third Gospel, where a grave difficulty is made of what is only an erroneous reading or translation occurring in a few manuscripts.

We have already remarked [159] that at this point of St. Luke's text [160] a certain confusion has slipped in, as a result of which several details have lost their natural place. Thus, the consecration of the wine is mentioned before that of the bread; [161] the Evangelist introduces the Eucharistic chalice twice, unless the cup first mentioned belongs to the legal meal, as many commentators suppose; the rivalry between the Apostles, which almost certainly occurred at the beginning of the meal in connection with their being seated at table, is placed at the very end. Certain early documents, few in number and untrustworthy in this connection, add to the

[156] Mark 14: 22–24.

[157] Mark 14: 25.

[158] Loisy, *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, II, 540; Klostermann, *Markus*, p. 124. The latter author is less affirmative.

[159] Page 394.

[160] Luke 22: 15–30.

[161] In the same manner St. Luke transposes the second and third temptation of Christ. (Cf. Matt. 4: 5–10 and Luke 4: 5–12.)

confusion by curiously abridging the most important part of the account. In fact, they stop after the words "This is My body, which is given for you," and omit all that follows, namely: "Do this for a commemoration of Me. In like manner the chalice also, after He had supped, saying: This is the chalice, the new testament in My blood, which shall be shed for you." [162] Some Rationalist critics,[163] basing their argument on this variant, as though it represented the primitive text of St. Luke, declare that in reality there was nothing Eucharistic in the Last Supper, which was simply a meal, ceremonial or otherwise.

For anyone to reason thus, he must, against all rules of textual criticism, be unmindful that these documents cannot prevail. Being so few in number and being so questionable in this passage, they cannot outweigh all the Greek manuscripts (except D), most of the versions, and the earlier liturgies. We have here one of those anomalies to be met with at times in the old manuscripts and generally traceable to some copyist's error or stupidity. Even if this abridged text were authentic—which it certainly is not—the narratives of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Paul would be amply sufficient to give us an exact and complete idea of what took place at the Last Supper.

Another objection is expressed by Albert Réville as follows: "It will be admitted that, if there was the institution of a sacrament, in which case all the words would be extremely important, especially if a supernatural value is to be attached to that institution, it is not credible that the Evangelists and St. Paul would have failed to record an identical

[162] Luke 22: 19 f. Among the documents referred to are a Greek manuscript (D) of the sixth century, famous for its eccentric variants, and some manuscripts of the Itala version.

[163] *E. g.*, J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des N. T.*, I, 191, 470–472; Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Marci*, 2d ed., pp. 115–118.

formula, without the least shade of variation." [164] But a reading of the different formulas cited above [165] will convince us that they are identical, not only in substance, but also in form. The variations are "insignificant," as many Liberal theologians acknowledge. We cannot be sure whether Jesus said, for example: "This is My blood, [the blood] of the new testament," or "This chalice is the new testament in My blood." But everyone must see that these phrases are substantially identical. The like may be said of the other little textual variations. And we are not certain but that they were modified by the revisers. The slight differences that we have observed were inevitable and arose from the oral tradition.

2. Many things have been said against the Catholic interpretation of the words used by our Lord in instituting the Eucharist. Is it true that they are "obscure in their brevity"? [166] "Even the patriach of the Reformation [Luther] was unable to deny their irresistible clearness. 'I would like,' he said,[167] 'to find a man able to prove that there is only bread and wine in the Eucharist; he would render me a great service. I have sweat a great deal over the study of this question, but I feel bound; the Gospel text is very clear.[168] . . . Doctor Carlstadt tortures the pronoun 'This'; Zwingli is captivated by the verb 'is'; Oecolampadius twists the word 'body'; others inflict martyrdom on the whole text. . . . I challenge them to bring me a Bible where we find the words: This is the sign of My body.'" [169] Melanchthon wrote: [170] "These words, 'This is My body,' shine forth as clear as a flash of lightning. What can the terrified mind set up in opposition

[164] *Jésus de Nazareth,* II, 511.
[165] Pages 395–405.
[166] J. Weiss, *op. cit.,* I, 471.
[167] *Epist. ad Argentinenses.*
[168] *Apolog. de Coena Domini.*
[169] Monsabré, *Exposition du Dogme Catholique; L'Eucharistie,* p. 38.
[170] *De Veritate Corporis et Sanguinis,* p. 39.

to them?" Surely, "hermeneutics and philology compel us to take them in a literal sense, under pain of surrendering Scripture to all the riotous vagaries in which the human mind would be pleased to indulge. When the Gospel says, 'The Word was made flesh,' when Jesus declares that He and His Father are one, He speaks no more clearly than in the words 'This is My body, This is My blood.' " [171] And let us recall that the institution of the Eucharist was "preceded by a promise from which Christ had excluded every figure or symbol or metaphor." [172]

So evident is this that most Rationalist critics ignore this side of the question and turn the discussion to entirely other points. As for orthodox Protestants, they cling, though rather painfully, to the symbolic and allegorical theory of Zwingli and Calvin. One of them tells us [173] that in the act of the Eucharistic rite itself there are represented two phases—the divine offer and the human acceptance. The aspect of the human acceptance, we are told, is clear, simply announcing the death of the Lord; but the divine aspect is mysterious and unfathomable: we know clearly what we have to do to make a good communion, and we can leave to God the secret of what He gives us in a good communion. This is the view of an eminent Protestant scholar. He says that we should leave God's secret to Him. But where is the secret? Did not Christ state plainly what He gives us, His flesh for food and His blood for drink? Moreover, there is not the slightest trace of allegory in the texts. On the contrary, it all has a realistic meaning, which Jesus insisted upon in the discourse of the promise, saying that we must eat His flesh and drink His blood. How can anyone maintain that we have here

[171] Monsabré, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

[172] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[173] Farrar, *Life of Christ*, 23d ed., II, 292. See also Godet, *Commentaire sur l'Évangile de S. Luc*, 2d ed., II, 365–370; Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, II, 511.

simply "a parable in action"?[174] Feeling that His end was approaching, because each day He became more certain that He would succumb under the weight of His enemies' hatred, He broke the bread; this act signified: Thus will My body soon be treated; then He poured some wine into a cup—according to Oscar Holtzmann, He even poured a small quantity on the ground—thus indicating that His blood would be shed. There is some truth in these words; yet this sort of explanation does not go beneath the surface of the texts and neglects their chief significance, which was the changing of the bread into the body of Christ and of the wine into His blood.

According to the radical theologians and exegetes, Jesus did not think of establishing what we call the Sacrament of the Eucharist. A fact of this kind "has no place in a history of Jesus. . . . Such an episode cannot be related as historic," if it is given the Catholic meaning,[175] if we attribute to the Savior the intention of creating a permanent rite. There was nothing more than a meal eaten by the intimate group of the Master and His Apostles. The Rationalists view that meal under two aspects: as a perpetual union that Jesus wished to establish between Himself and His disciples, and between all Christians, before leaving them for a while; and as a memorial of His death. Both ideas are correct, for our Lord clearly declared them. "It is because He is about to die, that He institutes a mode of real presence among His own, enabling them to unite themselves to Him, and this communion will be the more precious for them as it commemorates His sacrifice and contains the price of that sacrifice."[176] But manifestly this double concept is realized only if Jesus did really institute a Sacrament, as required by the sacred nar-

[174] A Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 358.
[175] *Ibid.*, p. 502.
[176] Lagrange, *L'Évangile de S. Marc*, p. 358.

ratives. If that institution did not take place, the words "This is My body," "This is My blood," which several Rationalist writers quite justly find "touching," [177] were altogether useless. We might even say that, in such case, they assume a theatrical air which completely disagrees with the Savior's habitual simplicity.

The Rationalists eliminate from the Last Supper the notion of sacrifice as well as that of Sacrament. One of them says: "In no document is the Eucharist presented as a sacrifice, redemptive or otherwise, with Christ as the sacrificer or the victim." [178] The assertion would be strange if it did not come from a Rationalist writer. In the four documents nearest to the events, Jesus speaks of the bread and wine changed into His body and blood as of victims immolated for the salvation of men. True, the radical theologians suppress whatever militates against their theories in the Eucharistic texts, and argue as if the formulas modified by them were those which our Lord uttered. But the words, "My body, which is given for you, My blood of the new testament (or, the new testament in My blood), which shall be shed for you," are certainly genuine and give to the Last Supper and to the rite which reproduces it, the character of a veritable sacrifice. Jesus sealed the New Testament with His blood, as the Old Testament had been sealed at Sinai by the blood of victims: the similarity forces itself upon us and places the Savior's intention into a clear light.[179]

Such was the belief of the first Christians. "At Rome and Corinth (and in all the newly founded churches), the Supper was celebrated, and during it there was breaking of bread and drinking of the chalice. By these ceremonies not only was there a repetition of what Jesus had done, but His death was

[177] Réville, *loc. cit.*
[178] Jean Réville, *Les Origines de l'Eucharistie,* p. 116.
[179] Ex. 24:8; Heb. 8:8–13; 9:15–28.

reproduced as though present, by an act that we might almost call dramatic. . . . It is what St. Paul calls showing the death of the Lord." [180] This avowal is made by one of the leaders of the radical school. But nothing better attests that special faith of the early Church than the proud reply of the Apostle Andrew to the proconsul of Achaia, who was urging him to sacrifice to the gods: "Each day I sacrifice on the altar to the almighty God . . . not the flesh of bulls or the blood of goats, but the spotless Lamb, ever living even after the believers have eaten His flesh." [181] There is no religion without sacrifice, for sacrifice is the religious act *par excellence:* therefore Jesus instituted the Eucharist, which is both a Sacrament and a sacrifice—that unbloody sacrifice which the prophet Malachias foretold would be offered throughout the world and would replace all the bloody victims of the Old Testament.[182]

3. The Origins.—"Critics now consider a further question, one that will probably not be finally answered for a long time. It refers to the relation between the thought of the Evangelists, that is, the thought of the primitive Church, . . . and what was really said at Christ's last supper." These words of Loisy [183] show us that the radical school of theology does not believe that "the thought of the primitive Church" concerning the Last Supper agrees with "what was really foretold" and really done in the cenacle. Such an assertion should not astonish us. But we have a right to be surprised at hearing these critics, who claim to be ignorant of what Jesus said and did at His last meal, speak as though they had been there and knew the details much better than the honest and well enlightened historians who related them a few years after the events themselves.

[180] J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des N. T.,* I, 190.
[181] *Acta Sanctorum,* 30th November.
[182] Mal. 1 : 10 f.
[183] *Les Évangiles Synoptiques,* II, 534.

These critics tell us that it was not Jesus who instituted the Eucharist, either as a transient act or as a permanent rite: His preaching and His general conduct were not in keeping with this sort of institution; rather He was in principle opposed to external rites and, on the contrary, favored the worship of God "in spirit and in truth." And it is sometimes said that, as He believed the end of the world to be very near, He could hardly have thought of instituting either a Church or a Sacrament that would have a considerable duration. The Rationalist critics constantly advance this postulate against us: the establishment of a Church and the institution of the Sacraments would have been in open contradiction to the Savior's whole being and thought. This is not the proper place for us to discuss this assertion. We merely wish to say that no valid proof is given for it.

The new school tells us that things took place in the following manner: The Apostles and their first disciples were enthused by their imaginary faith in their Master's Resurrection, as much as they had been disheartened by His death. They often met together and partook of their frugal evening meal, during which they used to speak of Him with warm affection. At first there was no thought of finding a resemblance between these meetings and the Last Supper. That idea did not enter their minds until later, and then only little by little. Once it penetrated their souls, it quickly acquired consistency; imaginations were warmed, and thanks to a few disciples "of a rather tender and exalted piety," [184] it was finally believed that Jesus had established a real Sacrament and had commanded the renewal of "the Lord's Supper." Paul aided powerfully to plant this belief in men's minds, by the account of a special revelation which he claimed to have received from the Savior.[185] He it was who arbitrarily made

[184] Jean Réville, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

[185] Brandt, *Die evangelische Geschichte und der Ursprung des Christenthums*, pp. 296–298.

of an ordinary meal a permanent memorial of the death of Christ; he it was who connected the Last Supper with the festival of the Pasch.[186] But how many errors—we may rightly call them intentional errors—are contained in these assertions! A mere reading of St. Paul's account is enough to show that he "is fully aware of having invented nothing," [187] but, on the contrary, of conforming to the historical reality. And the Acts of the Apostles proves that the celebration of the holy mysteries, following Christ's example and command, took place in the Church of Jerusalem many years before Paul's conversion.

Thus the Rationalist hypotheses crumble. How can these critics claim that their method is historical and critical when, conspicuously in the present case, it violates the most elementary rules of the historical method? The Gospel texts are so clear as to embarrass these critics; therefore they deny their genuineness. St. Paul's narrative and remarks are a refutation of their theory; therefore they claim that the Apostle of the Gentiles created the Eucharist. They assert that we do not know what took place at the Last Supper, yet they seek to strengthen their position by quoting Christ's words on that occasion, words that plainly have only one and an almost commonplace meaning.[188]

But their attempt is vain: not by groundless negations and assertions, not by distorting genuine texts and the best at-

[186] See 1 Cor. 11:23. The Rationalists tell us that it was a purely subjective revelation, because it took place in the realm of the subconscious, where "visions and dreams" are prepared. (Loisy, *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, II, 532.) Some Catholic commentators think that the words, *"Ego accepi a Domino,"* are sufficiently explained by saying that the revelation was only indirect, and that in fact it may be considered as nothing more than a tradition, which came from Christ Himself through the intermediary of the Apostles. "But the expression 'I have received' can refer to nothing but a personal communication [made to St. Paul], and the words 'of the Lord' must indicate a revelation made directly by Jesus Himself." (Godet, *Commentaire sur l'Évangile de S. Luc*, 2d ed., II, 369.)

[187] Lagrange, *L'Évangile de S. Marc*, p. 357.

[188] Jean Réville, *L'Origine de l'Eucharistie*, p. 641: "What Jesus said to His

tested history, will they succeed in proving their contention regarding the Eucharist and its institution.[189] The texts are there; the interpretation which has always been given to them by the Church is in perfect conformity with the rules of language and logic.

XI. Christ's Agony at Gethsemani

Modern Rationalism has shown no more regard for our Lord's agony at Gethsemani than for the other events of His life. But it nearly always approaches this episode with an appearance of respect, as though it regretted being obliged to treat it with a criticism that it decided will be very severe.[190] They speak of it as "a scene of unutterable anguish" and say that "in hours of harrowing grief and despair, religious souls, distressed by sorrow, turn to that scene that they may derive resignation and courage from it." [191] But, in this case as elsewhere, the Rationalist critics, after raising their voice for this sentimental avowal, settle down to the work of destruction.

1. Some men there are who, "from the summit of their ignorant presumption," [192] look upon the Savior's agony as a scene of weakness and cowardice. This coarse insult, going back to Celsus and Julian the Apostate,[193] has been repeated again and again in the course of anti-religious history. In our

Apostles in that solemn hour we shall never know." And the same author at once proceeds to tell us that the Savior spoke of the heavenly Father's love for His children, of the Messianic Kingdom, etc. Albert Réville also devotes several pages to this question (*Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 506–512), telling us how the idea of the institution of a Sacrament was gradually formed.

[189] Batiffol, *L'Eucharistie*, 5th ed., pp. 141–156.

[190] J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des N. T.*, I, 194.

[191] A. Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 368.

[192] These words of the Anglican author, Canon Farrar (*Life of Jesus*, II, 312), are no exaggeration.

[193] Origen, *Contra Cels.*, II, 24; Münter, *Fragm. Patrum Graecor.*, I, 121.

own day the Rationalists do not enunciate it so baldly, yet many of their writings contain what amounts to the same thing.[194] But the divine Hero of Gethsemani needs no one to take up His defense, for He surpassed the bravery of the most valiant and glorious martyrs. He could easily have escaped from His enemies by flight or by resorting to His divine omnipotence. Contrariwise He comes of His own accord to the place where the traitor can find Him without even the trouble of a search. It is true that some critics, following Strauss,[195] regret that Jesus did not display the proud stolidity and affected calmness of a Socrates and other sages of paganism. Renan had a better comprehension of that inner strife at Gethsemani; he says that, after that struggle, "there remains only the incomparable hero of the passion and the perfect model" that we admire.[196]

2. Liberal criticism declines to accept the loftier meaning and true purpose of our Lord's agony. And sometimes it does so in most disrespectful terms. "Orthodox mythology," says Albert Réville, "is pleased to explain this weakness of its God-Man by imagining some sort of abominable justice of God the Father, burdening the Son with the weight of the collective sin of mankind, that He may expiate it by experiencing, in all their intensity and in His own single person, the immeasurable weight of the pains that are its irremissible punishment." [197] This, we are told, would be "fantastic theology," a "myth." We pity the men who are unwilling to understand the beauty and truth of that great thought, a truth readily accepted by Paul, Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Bossuet, Bourdaloue, and so many

[194] Cf. Strauss, *Life of Jesus,* II, 324 ff.

[195] *Loc. cit.* Cf. O. Holtzmann, *Life of Jesus,* p. 470.

[196] *Vie de Jésus,* 1st ed., p. 379.

[197] *Jésus de Nazareth,* II, 372. He employs this offensive expression to designate Christian theology, Protestant as well as Catholic.

other Christian geniuses. For a more extended treatment of the subject we refer the critics to the writings of these great men.

3. But "the whole of this history [of Gethsemani] is wanting in the Fourth Gospel." [198] This is a frequent argument of Rationalist authors. It would be important only if St. John's intention had been to give a complete account of the Savior's life. Not only is this scene of the agony wanting in the Fourth Gospel, but they tell us it is incompatible with the character attributed to Christ up to that point. For John, his Hero "is not a desolated Christ, prostrate on the ground in a suppliant attitude, but a calm, erect Christ, having no need of the succor of angels, a Christ courageously advancing like a conqueror to meet His executioners. In very truth, the Evangelist who purposed showing in Jesus, not a man, but a divine person, could not find even the smallest place in his narrative for so sorrowful an episode." [199]

This reasoning is specious, but shallow. Do not the Synoptics also purpose showing a divine person in Jesus? And does St. John constantly show us a Christ who is impassible, who is human only in appearance, who never experienced human infirmities and distress? The Christ of the Fourth Gospel, as of the first three, is a "man of sorrows," capable of groaning, of feeling pity, of suffering, of weeping. The reading of chapter 11 would be enough to convince us. And in verses 21–33 of chapter 12, especially in verse 27, where Jesus is troubled at the thought of the sufferings that await Him, and where He is, so to speak, tempted to say to His Father, "Father, save Me from this hour," we see that, even though St. John judged he might omit the account of our Lord's agony, he mentions its sorrowful prelude, without thinking

[198] Strauss, *New Life of Jesus*, II, 327.

[199] Keim, *Jesus von Nazara*, III, 305. See also Strauss, *New Life of Jesus*, II, 325–327; Reuss, *La Théologie Johannique*, p. 314; W. Bauer, *Das Johannesevangelium erklärt*, p. 121; Heitmüller, *Die Schriften des N. T.*, II, part 2, 275 f.

that it was incompatible with his Hero's divine nature. There is no warrant for asserting that the Fourth Gospel disagrees with the Synoptics in the matter of the agony at Gethsemani. A perfect accord exists between the different narratives, which supplement one another, since St. John informs us that Christ's agony began even before Gethsemani.

4. Liberal criticism makes a particular point of attacking the three or four lines in which St. Luke speaks of the appearance of an angel and of the bloody sweat.[200] It denies the authenticity of the passage and the historical character of the events. We must now consider these two points.[201]

a) These verses are wanting in several ancient Greek manuscripts—an omission remarked already by St. Hilary [202] and St. Jerome. But their authenticity is sufficiently proved by their presence in several hundred other manuscripts, some of very early date, in the most ancient and most prized translations, and in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers.[203] Thus we have an important series of witnesses, several of them going back to the second century. This testimony is so positive that it has made some Rationalists favor the authenticity.[204] As St. Epiphanius supposed long ago,[205] we are in the presence of a fraudulent suppression made at an early date by some copyists, because of doctrinal prejudices, some regarding this passage as irreconcilable with Christ's divine nature, others (for example, the Docetae) finding that it was too manifest a proof of His human nature.

[200] Luke 22:43 f.

[201] They will be found treated at greater length in Fillion, *Essais d'Exégèse*, pp. 101–127.

[202] *De Trinit.*, X.

[203] *V. g.*, St. Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 103, and St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, III, xxii, 2.

[204] Strauss, Renan, Keim, etc. See also W. Bauer, *Leben Jesu im Zeitalter der neutestam. Apokryphen*, p. 171. Some Protestant commentators, though not admitting that the passage comes from St. Luke himself, consider it to be very ancient and an account of real facts.

[205] *Ancoratus*, 31. He undertook a defense of the authenticity of the two verses.

b) Furthermore, we are told, these two verses, whether genuine or not, do not contain historic facts, but simple legends or poetic embellishments. As representative of this view we quote one of the best-known Rationalist critics, J. Weiss. He says: "What sort of God is it that needs to be strengthened by an angel?" This detail is, therefore, legendary. The detail about the bloody sweat is merely "a rhetorical figure," as when we speak of tears of blood.[206] At the very least, therefore, St. Luke exaggerates, either to emphasize the extremely painful character of the Savior's agony, or to enhance His patience and resignation. The two details manifest the artificial tendencies of a late tradition, for which Christ's sufferings were not terrible enough, nor His greatness sufficiently sublime.[207]

These objections do not spring from the domain of historical criticism, but are drawn from the realm of dogmatic preconceptions, according to which, since the supernatural does not exist, all phenomena presented as such must be rejected as non-existent, or as falsified, exaggerated, or embellished. As the principle is false, its applications are so likewise. Moreover, where do we see the least poetical coloring, the least trace of exaggeration in the clear, simple, restrained language of the Evangelist: "There appeared to Him an angel. . . . And His sweat became as drops of blood . . ."? Let us not forget that the Evangelist (Luke) is a physician, an observing man by profession, and that one of the two details, the bloody sweat, was within the scope of his professional knowledge: this circumstance proves that, in mentioning the other detail, he had in mind a real and objective phenomenon.

The words, "His sweat became as drops of blood," are sometimes interpreted as meaning only a sweat that was thick

[206] *Die Schriften des N. T.*, I, 475.
[207] Keim, *Jesus von Nazara*, III, 304.

like blood. But, as Strauss forcefully and rightly maintains,[208] it is the noun "blood" that conveys the principal idea in this passage, because all the other expressions of the sentence refer to it. The comparison of sweat with blood would lose its whole force and would be downright stupid if only the words "as drops" had a precise meaning.

XII. The Real Meaning of Christ's Death

We have no room to set forth this subject with all the development given it by the theologians.[209] We wish merely to place in juxtaposition a few of the principal New Testament texts which clearly prove the expiatory and redemptive character of Christ's death, and the interpretation given these texts by the Rationalist critics and a large number of Protestant theologians.[210]

1. Anyone, of whatever theological school of thought, upon reading the New Testament, must be struck by the considerable portion of it which is devoted to the Passion and death of Christ. The Savior Himself frequently reverts to it. Each of the Evangelists consecrates about a quarter of his narra-

[208] *Vie de Jésus*, II, part 2, 471.

[209] See St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, p. 3, q. 43 and 49, and his principal commentators; Franzelin, *De Verbo Incarnato*, 4th ed., theses 46–50; Corluy, *Spicilegium Dogmatico-Biblicum*, II, 82–151; Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theologiae Dogmaticae*, 5th ed., I, 524–557; Staab, *Die Lehre von der stellvertretenden Genugtuung Christi historisch-kritisch dargestellt.*

[210] During the last half century this question has been very much discussed in Germany, and even more so in England. It has given rise to many books and articles in reviews. A considerable bibliography will be found in Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, under the words "Atonement," "Expiation," "Propitiation," "Ransom," and "Sacrifice." See also Denney, *The Death of Christ, Its Place and Interpretation in the New Testament*, 1911; Campbell, *The Atonement, the Heart of the Gospel*, 1907; Bachmann, *Die Bedeutung des Sühnetodes Christi für das christliche Gewissen*, 1907; R. Seeberg, *Der Tod Christi in seiner Bedeutung für die Erlösung*, 1900. For a frankly Rationalist view see A. Sabatier, *La Doctrine de l'Expiation et son Évolution Historique*, 1903; G. Hoffmann, *Die Bedeutung des Todes Jesu nach seinen eigenen Aussagen auf Grund der synoptischen Evangelien*, 1901; Fiebig, *Jesu Blut, ein Geheimnis*, 1906.

tive to it. In the Acts of the Apostles, in the Epistles, and in the Apocalypse, the Apostles speak of it on every occasion. The Evangelists and the Apostles could not have declared the extraordinary importance which they attached to this culminating event of the world's history more forcefully. The idea of the redemptive death of Christ thus reëchoes throughout the pages of the New Testament. In the Rationalist world, as in the Protestant and the Catholic world, it has been repeated again and again that this idea constitutes the very heart and center of the New Testament.

In the first pages of the Gospel, Jesus is represented, even before His birth, as a redeemer who, according to the predictions of the ancient prophets, was to atone for the sins of His people.[211] Isaias had foretold this, specifying that the Messias would obtain this remission of sins at the price of humiliations and suffering.[212] "Surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows. . . . He was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins. . . . The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. . . . He hath borne the sins of many, and hath prayed for the transgressors." He received the name of Jesus, because "He shall save His people from their sins," [213] in the manner so eloquently described by the prophet. In that same prophecy Isaias compares "the man of sorrows" to a lamb that suffers itself to be immolated without murmuring.[214] And this same image is applied to the Savior by the precursor, who says as he points Him out to his disciples: "Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world." [215]

The Savior Himself knows, from the very first, that He will be that victim immolated for the salvation of the world,

[211] Luke 1:77.
[212] Is. 53:4, 5, 6, 12. The whole chapter might be cited.
[213] Matt. 1:21.
[214] Is. 53:7.
[215] John 1:29, 36.

and by an inevitable necessity, according to the divine plan. He speaks of His expiatory sacrifice at first in figurative terms, when He refers to it as a "raising up" that is to take place upon a cross, to procure the salvation of men.[216] But soon His language assumes all the exactness that could be desired, and He frequently reminds the Apostles of the necessity of His death. He was most explicit on two occasions, mentioned above, when He spoke of the Son of Man as giving "His life a redemption for many," [217] and when He instituted the Eucharist, speaking of His body "given" for us, of His blood "shed for many unto remission of sins." [218] It is noteworthy that the expressions here employed are as explicit as possible. What is a "redemption" or "ransom" [219] but the price given for the deliverance of a prisoner who is incapable of redeeming himself? And are not Christ's body, given for the salvation of sinners, and His blood, shed for the same purpose, true ransoms? Herein is the *satisfactio vicaria,* the substitution of one innocent for an insolvent sinner, Christ's bloody expiation to avert from us the anger of His Father.

Following their Master, the Apostles preached this consoling doctrine. St. Peter, addressing the members of the Sanhedrin a few days after our Lord's Resurrection, said: "The God of our fathers hath raised up Jesus, whom you put to death, hanging Him upon a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand, to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins." [220] And in his First Epistle he says: "You were redeemed [221] [from sin] . . . with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled." He then offers to the faithful for their imitation "the

[216] John 3:14–16.
[217] Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45.
[218] Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:19. Cf. 1 Cor. 11:24.
[219] In the Greek, λύτρον (Vulg., *redemptio*).
[220] Acts 5:30 f.
[221] See 1 Peter 1:18. In the Greek, ἐλυτρώθητε (Vulg., *redempti estis*).

Christ" who "suffered for us," "who did no sin," but who "His own self bore our sins in His body upon the tree," as Isaias foretold, saying: "by whose stripes you were healed." [222]

St. John, the beloved disciple, in his First Epistle speaks of Christ as "the propitiation [223] for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world." [224] In the same Epistle he says that "the blood of Jesus . . . cleanseth us from all sin," [225] and that God "sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins." [226] In the Apocalypse, St. John often reëchoes the praise of the slain Lamb, whose blood redeemed and purified us.[227]

All this is characteristic. But St. Paul proves this thesis even more conclusively and extensively. In his writings the redemptive death of our Lord Jesus Christ is nearly everywhere the dominant thought, which the author repeats in a variety of forms. He makes it "the fixed point in his teaching." [228] He says that he preaches "Christ crucified." [229] And he does not fail to point out to his neophytes the supreme end of Christ's death: "I delivered unto you first of all, which I also received: how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." [230] And by virtue of that blessed death, men, even though sinners and separated from God, are "justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath proposed to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood." [231] And again: "If, when we were ene-

[222] See 1 Peter 2:21–24; cf. Is. 53:11.
[223] Ἱλασμός (Vulg., *propitiatio*).
[224] 1 John 2:2.
[225] *Ibid.*, 1:7.
[226] *Ibid.*, 4:10.
[227] Apoc. 5:4–6, 12–13; 7:10, 14–17; 12:11; 14:1–5; 19:6–9.
[228] See Simpson in Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, I, 133.
[229] 1 Cor. 1:23.
[230] *Ibid.*, 15:3.
[231] Rom. 3:23–25. In the Greek, the words that we translate "redemption" (ἀπολυτρώσεως) and "propitiation" (ἱλαστήριον) are very expressive.

mies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life. . . . We glory in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received reconciliation." [232] In Christ "we have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins." [233] "It hath well pleased the Father . . . through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, making peace through the blood of His cross. . . . And you, whereas you were some time alienated and enemies in mind in evil works, yet now He hath reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unspotted and blameless before Him." [234] These few texts, taken almost haphazard, prove how precious to St. Paul was "the word of the cross," [235] and what profound meaning and special value he attached to Christ's death. In the Epistle to the Hebrews,[236] this abundant idea of the "eternal redemption" which Jesus obtained for us by His sufferings and death, is beautifully developed. In opposition to the numberless and inefficacious victims of the Old Testament the author contrasts the sacrifice of Christ, the founder and pontiff of the New Testament: a unique sacrifice, offered once for all, but sufficing to expiate the sins of the whole world, because it possesses an infinite value.

In short, the New Testament writings present the death of Christ under three different aspects, which make only one reality of it: it was a living manifestation of God's love for us; [237] it was an expression of the immense love of the Savior Himself; [238] it was above all a ransom, an expiation, a propitiation, and a redemption.

[232] Rom. 5:10 f.; cf. 8:1 f.; Gal. 3:13; 6:14.
[233] Eph. 1:7; cf. 4:32.
[234] Col. 1:20–22.
[235] See 1 Cor. 1:18, 23.
[236] Especially chapters 9 and 10.
[237] Rom. 5:8 f.; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 John 4:10, etc.
[238] Rom. 8:34; 2 Cor. 5:14 f., etc.

This interpretation of the death of Christ is also seen in the writings of the earliest Fathers, who make frequent allusions to the redemptive character of the Passion.[239] And this was universally held in the Christian churches at the beginning of the second century. The great theologians of the following centuries received it from the hands of their predecessors as a sacred deposit. Naturally, therefore, it became a formal dogma, one of the most sublime dogmas of our faith.

2. Such being the case, the attitude of the Rationalists, who for the most part reject the expiatory character of Christ's death, and that of many Protestants who follow them more or less closely on the same path, would be surprising if the interpretation of the Church, of the Apostles, of Jesus Himself, did not introduce a supernatural element, which many still persist in refusing to acknowledge. How is it possible to escape from so many texts—we have quoted only a small portion of them—that plainly refer to a propitiatory ransom, offered by Jesus to His Father on the cross for the sins of men—a redemption understood in the strict sense? The Rationalists do it by resorting to their usual means: in violation of every rule of criticism they deny the authenticity of those words of Christ which are most opposed to their theory; despite the historical evidence, they affirm that St. Paul is the veritable author of the system of the redemption; they interpret the texts in a way to make them mean something entirely different from the *satisfactio vicaria.*

Let us give a few examples.

a) According to Loisy and many other Rationalist writers, there is no proof that the idea of the redemption "belongs to the teaching of Jesus, and to the faith of the first [Christian]

[239] St. Clement, *Epist. ad Cor.*, 12:7; 31:6; 49:6; St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, V, vii, 3; St. Polycarp, *Epist. ad Philipp.*, II, 1; St. Ignatius, *Epist. ad Polycarp.*, III, 2.

community." [240] The words regarding His life being sacrificed as a ransom for the sins of the world, and the words at the Last Supper, alluding to His "body given" and His "blood shed" for our salvation, have been falsely attributed to Him.—This whole assertion is baseless, since these words of the Savior are certainly authentic.

b) Hollmann, in a work composed expressly to investigate what was Christ's own view of His death, according to the Synoptic Gospels, arrives at the conclusion that we cannot know His thought on the matter, since what the Gospels offer us as His personal view is really only "a dogmatic construction," that is, a theory invented by the primitive Church. In a word, "Jesus did not look upon His death from the point of view of an expiation for the sins of others." [241] Here again all we can do is to protest purely and simply, and refer to the Gospel texts. No one has a right to assign their composition to so late a date as to place them on other lips than those of Christ. We can at least take note of an admission which the Rationalists are obliged to make: "As every part of the New Testament shows, early Christianity understood the meaning of Christ's death to be that of a redemption wrought by His blood." [242]

c) The "dogmatic construction" spoken of by Hollmann is rather generally attributed by the Rationalists to St. Paul, the central point of whose personal theology is said to be the doctrine of the redemptive death.[243] It is true that our Lord's death on the cross does form the center of the Apostle's teaching, but that in no way proves that it was invented

[240] *The Gospel and the Church*, p. 129.

[241] *Op. cit.*, p. 158. W. Bousset, *Was wissen wir von Jesus?* p. 58: "Jesus is far from thinking that . . . man's reconciliation with God can be guaranteed only by His death." (See the same author's *Jesus*, p. 100.)

[242] Fiebig, *Jesu Blut*, p. 10.

[243] Guignebert, *Manuel d'Histoire Ancienne du Christianisme*, p. 224. (Cf. Loisy, *loc. cit.*)

by him. The idea of redemption by Christ existed long before Paul, since the prophet Isaias had already propounded it so eloquently. St. Peter, as we have seen, refers to it several years before St. Paul's conversion, and Jesus Himself—we must always return to Him as to the principal agent—made it known to His future vicar.

d) A number of Protestant theologians, especially in England, while not altogether denying the expiatory value of our Lord's death, take away from the dogma of the redemption nearly all its significance by presenting it in a vague and general form, as though the Biblical texts mentioning it meant only that Jesus procured a great good for humanity by His death.[244] This good He had also procured by His whole life, by His preaching, and by His example, thus aiding us to withdraw from sin and enter into favor with God, if we have committed sin.—Evidently such an interpretation is far from rendering justice to the texts concerning the redemption, and deprives them of their true meaning and full force. It was not of this sort of satisfaction that Jesus and His Apostles spoke.

e) Some advanced Rationalists have been immoderate in the expression of false and unjust opinions contrary to the Catholic theory of satisfaction and redemption. Albert Réville, for example, wrote the lines quoted above; and they do little honor to his memory.[245] Others, in more moderate language, have said that the idea of the atonement, as the Church understands it, namely, in the sense that Jesus took upon Himself the burden of our sins to expiate them on the cross, is impossible, since each one must atone for his own sins.[246] This sort of redemption, though doing honor to Christ's heart, would be unjust *in se,* because an innocent

[244] Fiebig, *op. cit.,* p. 48.

[245] *Jésus de Nazareth,* II, 372. (Cf. Reuss, *L'Histoire Évangélique,* p. 655.)

[246] "It is a matter of each individual's most intimate and most personal concern. How could anyone else stand in his place?" Fiebig, *op. cit.,* p. 57.

person should not be punished for the guilty. Harnack, while not delving beneath the surface, rightly judges this question by saying: "The sufferings of the pure and the just are its [history's] saving element, that is to say, it is not words but deeds, and not deeds only, but self-sacrificing deeds, and not only self-sacrificing deeds, but the surrender of life itself, that forms the turning-point in every great advance in history. . . . Wherever any great deed has been accomplished in history, the finer a man's moral feelings are, the more sensible will he be of a vicarious suffering." [247] And if this is true from a purely natural standpoint, how much more so will it be with regard to Jesus? Even though Harnack does not believe in the divinity of Christ, he is right in not accepting the judgment of unfeeling and blind Rationalists about His sufferings and death.[248]

It was not a feeling of human solidarity that led Jesus to become our representative before God and to expiate our sins. This mode of atonement entered into the divine plan from all eternity, and it is in perfect accord with God's holiness and justice, as it is with His goodness. His holiness had been grievously offended by the crimes of men; His justice would have had to proceed rigorously unless an adequate reparation were offered. But how could simple mortals make an integral reparation for such an offense, how could they pay such a debt in full? In His infinite love for His Father and for fallen humanity, the Second Person of the Divine Trinity became incarnate, to sacrifice Himself as our ransom—a ransom amply sufficient to redeem us. Hence, each of us can say with the Apostle: "He loved me and delivered Himself for me"; [249] and again: "God so loved the world as to

[247] *What is Christianity?* p. 170.
[248] *Ibid.*, p. 169.
[249] Gal. 2:20.

give His only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting." [250] However we may twist and turn the texts, they yield no other meaning than that of a *satisfactio vicaria,* a vicarious atonement that was hard but honorable for our Lord, and beneficent for us.

We gladly quote the words of a Protestant theologian who does not believe in the divinity of Christ, but understands the meaning of His Passion and death better than do many other followers of Luther: "Christ's death is the crowning of His life. But this is not saying enough; it was the purpose of that life. It is its very *raison d'être.* Christ's death is the keystone of His mission. . . . This is the traditional point of view. And it seems to us that in this matter tradition, inspired solely by religious sentiment, has seen more truly and deeply than authors who are too much concerned with testing the words of the Gospel in the crucible of their own reason. Theirs is an anti-scientific and even irrational method." [251]

XIII. Christ's Passion

We have thought it useful to place before our readers a summary of the thought of modern Liberal theology about the Passion of Christ. For this purpose we took notes from the writings of several of the most prominent Rationalist critics, such as H. J. Holtzmann, J. Weiss, Heitmüller, and O. Holtzmann in Germany, Albert Réville and Loisy in France. But inasmuch as a member of this same school has written a special work in which he reviews the Gospel narratives of the Passion for the purpose of studying how far they deserve to be considered historic, it will be simpler and likewise briefer to take him for our chief guide. As the occasion

[250] John 3: 16.

[251] Monnier, *La Mission Historique de Jésus,* p. 247.

offers, we will also cite the views of some of his fellow-critics, more or less advanced than he.

The author to whom we refer is W. Brandt, born at Amsterdam in 1855, and professor of the history of religions at the university of that same city since 1903. His book is written in German. Its title, when translated, reads: The Gospel Story and the Origin of Christianity, according to a Critical Study of the Documents Regarding the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus.[252] Its principles and method are those of Strauss. The work, comprising about 600 pages, is divided into four parts, the first of which is devoted to Christ's arrest and condemnation, the second to His crucifixion and death, the third to His burial and Resurrection. The fourth part sets forth the author's conclusions regarding our Lord's whole life as related in the Gospels. We are here concerned only with the first three parts. The whole book has the air of being scientific, and sometimes it really is so; for example, in the general question of the crucifixion as a form of public execution. The discussion is conducted entirely in a Rationalist spirit. We must, of course, pass over that and limit ourselves to citing its chief conclusions.

1. Jesus was arrested and condemned. Brandt considers these two facts as substantially historic; but he rejects a large number of the details connected with them. It is possible, he says, that one of Christ's disciples tried to defend Him at the time of His arrest, but "it is unlikely" that Simon Peter struck Malchus with a sword. The Fourth Gospel is the only one that names the Apostle in this matter. The healing of Malchus' ear is "an edifying detail, . . . but who can believe it?" The little address which, according to the Synoptics,[253] the Savior made to the Sanhedrin's emissaries who had

[252] *Die evangelische Geschichte und der Ursprung des Christentums auf Grund einer Kritik der Berichte über das Leiden und die Auferstehung Jesu.*

[253] Matt. 26: 55–56; Mark 14: 48–49; Luke 22: 52–53.

come to arrest Him, is not suited to the occasion; it must be dropped. The same fate is assigned to the warning given St. Peter with regard to his imprudent ardor: [254] all these words "are nothing less than probable." They take only a few lines; but Brandt considers them too "developed for the circumstances."

Judas really betrayed his Master; but several details which the Evangelists connect with his treason have been combined for reasons based on the Old Testament, "as, for example, the matter of the thirty *denarii* and the traitor's ignominious death. The Apostles did not really flee in a panic; seeing that they could not save Jesus, they simply went off, and no one thought of doing them any harm. In this instance, too, we are told, it was an Old Testament prophecy [255] that gave birth to that false interpretation of their action. The episode of the young man who escaped from the hands of the servants of the Sanhedrin, leaving in their hands the piece of cloth that he had wrapped about him, is authentic. Peter's denial is, in a general way, also genuine; but the fact has been remarkably expanded. The lanterns and torches spoken of by the Fourth Gospel in connection with Christ's arrest, must be put "to the credit of an amplifying imagination."

With regard to our Lord's ecclesiastical trial, Brandt makes this remark: "In the first place, we must ask ourselves whether we can consider it likely that Jesus was formally tried. In the Apostle Paul we have a witness against the existence of this trial." How is that? Where is this testimony of Paul? Nowhere and everywhere; it is the *testimonium silentii,* because nowhere in his Epistles does the Apostle mention this trial; for Brandt, such a silence is "a strong proof against the assertion that the Jewish authorities formally brought Jesus to trial." Moreover, we are told that

[254] Matt. 26: 52–54; John 18: 11.
[255] Matt. 26: 31; Mark 14: 27.

this trial "is in itself improbable"; there would not have been time enough for it. It is "a figment of the imagination," with nothing historical in it. "Jesus never came before the Jewish Great Council, and was not formally condemned by it."

The scene of insult and outrage which, according to the Synoptics,[256] followed the condemnation of Christ, was taken from the fifty-third chapter of Isaias; "it required no great effort of the imagination" to make up this episode. The penetrating look which St. Luke says Christ turned upon Peter [257] is nothing more than a touching invention. Is it possible that the Savior had any disciples among the members of the Sanhedrin? Nicodemus is a fictitious personage and, despite St. Mark's declaration, Joseph of Arimathea did not belong to the Sanhedrin.

What is to be said of the civil trial before Pilate? Jesus certainly appeared before the Roman governor. "But here there is a gap in the history of the Passion. There was no eyewitness who could supply primitive Christianity with testimony, until the hour of the crucifixion, which took place in public on Golgotha." Therefore it was impossible to know what occurred in the pretorium. And consequently free course was given the "imagination" to describe how Christ came from "the house" where He had been brought after His arrest, to that of the procurator, and still freer course to know what took place in Pilate's house. But at least the inscription on the cross served as an intimation; it announced that Jesus was put to death as "King of the Jews." The sacred writers "enlarged" upon that at their own will, by the aid of Old Testament prophecies which at a very early date attracted the attention of the first Christians. Thus they could imagine His silence, His few replies, and His whole

[256] Matt. 26:67–68; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63–65.
[257] Luke 22:61–62.

attitude before Pilate. Such at least is the assertion of Brandt and many of his fellow-critics.

We now turn to a few details of the trial before Pilate, the only one, according to Brandt, that really took place. The episode of Pilate's wife "is sufficiently characterized by its legendary nature." The incident about Barabbas as we read it in the Gospels, "appears altogether improbable." Are we to believe "that a Roman procurator came to Jerusalem, where he had at his disposal at least a cohort, quartered as a perpetual garrison in the Antonia tower, and allowed laws to be dictated to him by the populace of the city?" On the other hand, there is no Old Testament text as a basis for this detail, and this is an argument in favor of it. "The figure of Barabbas is too concrete to have been drawn from nothing." That bandit therefore existed and was released at the people's request; but the connection between Jesus and him is a Christian invention. The scene of the crowning with thorns is quite "in keeping with the character of the Roman soldiery." This is all the more reason for supposing that it was made up afterwards. And it contains some "improbable" details. How, for example, would one of the soldiers have had a purple cloak; and if he had, would he have let it be spotted with blood and spittle?[258] Furthermore, to the minds of Christians it was certain, according to the Old Testament, that the Messias was to have opprobrium heaped upon Him. Therefore there is nothing historical in the episode.

What is to be thought of Christ's coming before the tetrarch Herod? Brandt reminds us that "of all the scenes in which the sufferer appeared before the leaders of His people . . . or before Pilate, and in the hands of the Roman soldiers, we have not found a single one that might be traced back to information furnished by witnesses." Applying this

[258] As though there were question of a valuable garment! Brandt forgets that St. Matthew speaks of a simple "chlamys," which may have been far from new.

false premise to the incident which St. Luke places in Herod's palace, Brandt concludes that the detail has no historical basis. From what has been asserted regarding the absence of witnesses, it follows that everything related by St. John about our Lord's trial before Pilate "belongs to fiction, to romance," and rests on a few details (also fictitious) taken from the Synoptics. Yet Brandt acknowledges certain qualities in the author of the Fourth Gospel. He admits that he "shows a true poetic power," that he was "a Christian, a gifted thinker, a deeply religious man," but says he lacked the sense of historical criticism. He plainly contradicts various contemporary Jewish authors who declare that the Jewish authorities took no part in Christ's death. He feels "obliged, as a historian, . . . to recognize that the leaders of the Jewish people seized Jesus and delivered Him to the Romans; this means that they had Him condemned to death."

2. "He was crucified and died." Brandt's study, like that of all Liberal Protestant theologians, is so disastrous for the Gospel accounts of the Savior's Passion that one is happily surprised when it allows any isolated detail to go unchallenged. This is the case for the episode of Simon the Cyrenian. It is certain, we are told, that "he was constrained to carry the cross in place of Jesus." But the women of Jerusalem who, according to the Gospel, showed such tender and courageous sympathy for the divine *cruciarius,* "did not exist." The proof is that Jesus, in order to speak to them, would have had to stop, and the whole procession with Him; but the Evangelists make no mention of this. The wine mixed with myrrh is historical. It is correct to say that at least the Savior's hands were fastened to the cross with nails, and that His garments became the property of the soldiers; what is told about the tunic is legendary. It was at nine or ten o'clock in the morning that Jesus was crucified: Brandt evidently prefers the chronological indication given by St. Mark on this point.

The inscription fastened to the cross contained only the two Latin words *"Rex Iudaeorum"* and their Aramaic equivalent. "It is assuredly not historically true," he says, that the legend was written in three languages: this detail is a later invention. The story of the Sanhedrin going to Pilate with a request that the *titulus* be altered, is "an imaginary account": how could Christians have been able to know what took place between the procurator and the Jewish leaders?

We rightly cherish the seven words of Christ on the cross as a precious treasure. Rationalist criticism usually suppresses six of them, leaving as genuine only the prayer of anguish, *"Eli, Eli, lamma sabacthani."* They are satisfied with it, since it furnishes a basis for the conclusion that Jesus died in despair. But Brandt rejects this word along with the other six; he admits only the loud cry uttered by our Lord at the moment when He expired. The seven words, therefore, are imaginary, or taken from the Old Testament. The Christians are the ones who invented the insults to our Lord on the cross, as they did the good and the bad thief; it is probable that Christ was not crucified between two brigands; this detail was added so as to make it appear that He fulfilled this text of Isaias: "he was reputed with the wicked." It may be that a few devoted Galilean women stood at some distance from the cross during the Savior's agony; but neither His mother nor the beloved disciple was there. The scene related by the author of the Fourth Gospel is an imaginary incident. The other Evangelists would have mentioned the presence of Mary if she had been there. The sponge soaked with *posca,* which is supposed to have been raised to Christ's lips shortly before His death, is not historic; no one could have testified to the fact, which is a detail taken from Psalm 21.

After the views we have just sketched we can easily surmise what treatment is given to the prodigies that accompanied the Savior's crucifixion and death. First the darkness: it had

been said that the sun was darkened at Caesar's death; the Christians applied that detail to Christ's death, and it entered into the Gospels. The rending of the veil of the Temple from top to bottom, is "a symbolic fiction." The tombs opening and giving back their dead is pure legend. The centurion in charge of the crucifixion may have been impressed by all he saw; but St. Luke exaggerates when he attributes like sentiments to the other soldiers and to the others present. The piercing of Christ's side with a spear is pure fiction, based on the prophecy of Zacharias (12: 10). The Evangelist's repeated declarations on this point "arouse mistrust."

3. "Buried and risen." Brandt, despite the Gospel accounts, does not believe that the Savior's body was removed from the cross and buried on the first day. All that can be known is that the burial took place "thanks to the solicitude of a certain Joseph of Arimathea," which is really "historical," as is his act, provided we strip these data of all their legendary accompaniment. Brandt cites two proofs in favor of the burial understood in this sense. The first is positive: it consists in the testimony of St. Paul, who writes, but *sine adiuncto,* that Jesus "was buried." [259] This testimony is no doubt excellent; but we fail to see how it weakens that of the Evangelists who relate the details of the burial. The second proof is negative: the fact is not connected with any Old Testament prophecy. Joseph of Arimathea was not a disciple of the Savior; after performing his act of devotion "without any fuss," he is no more seen in Jerusalem, so that in the early Church no one knew the place of the Savior's burial.

Such, in their broad outlines, are the "results" of the analysis to which Brandt subjects the Gospel accounts of the Passion. In a word, he attributes a historical character only to the following facts: the Savior's betrayal by one of His intimate disciples; Peter's denial; the death sentence pro-

[259] See 1 Cor. 15:4.

nounced under the joint responsibility of the Jewish authorities and of Pilate; the help of Simon the Cyrenian in carrying Jesus' cross; the crucifixion at a place called Golgotha; the cause for the condemnation indicated by the inscription, "King of the Jews"; the death preceded by a loud cry; the almost secret burial. As for the reasons that decided Brandt to make all these eliminations, they are chiefly the influence of the Old Testament prophecies and the so-called lack of witnesses of the events. But would it not be more correct to say they are traceable to the persistent denial of the supernatural and, as a means of justifying that denial, to a most arbitrary method of criticism by which he eliminates at pleasure whatever is contrary to his preconceived ideas, and preserves only what is not absolutely opposed to his views. Many Liberal theologians do not go as far as Brandt, others go even farther; but the method of all of them is the same: hence, it is equally false, subjective, and arbitrary. To refute it, the mere setting forth of its details, as done in the above pages, is sufficient. Its attacks do not threaten those trustworthy descriptions, which are in harmony with all we know from other sources about the chief actors in the great tragedy, and also about Jewish or Roman laws and customs as mentioned by the Evangelists. The Rationalist critics would have the four Evangelists relate all the facts and do so in the same way. The silence of one they appeal to in opposition to the details given by another, as if two writers recounting the same series of events independently of each other were strictly obliged to say exactly the same things. Such a claim is not genuine. The attacks might have some foundation if the four sacred writers always agreed even to the smallest details.

In the first part of this work, we briefly considered the objection based on the supposed influence which the Old Testament prophecies are said to have exercised upon the

Gospels. Brandt is not the only one who has attempted to profit by that hypothesis against the historical character of many episodes of the Passion; in fact, all the Rationalist critics repeat it. One of them showed considerable acumen in composing a special work on this point. The writer is Professor Feigel, and the work professes to treat "the influence of the proof drawn from the prophecies and from other grounds upon the history of the Passion." [260] His theory is that, as the cross of Christ was, in St. Paul's words,[261] "unto the Jews indeed a stumbling-block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness," the first Christian preachers strove to represent it, on the contrary, as a glory for the Savior. And what a glory, indeed, if by dying on the cross He fulfilled the eternal designs of God, clearly announced by the ancient prophets of Israel, and thus saved mankind! Texts were sought in the Old Testament writings; various details seeming to apply directly to the *Christus patiens* were easily found, especially in the twenty-first Psalm and in the fifty-third chapter of Isaias, which were presented as a programme of the Messias' Passion. Then, as Brandt tells us, those early Christians went farther and more or less unwittingly, by the aid of other Old Testament texts, created entire episodes which, after passing from mouth to mouth, finally entered into the Gospels and were regarded as historic.

There is, certainly, invention and fiction, but it is on the part of these critics, not on the part of the Christians and the Evangelists. Rationalism, with all its numerous attempts, has not succeeded and will never succeed in proving that a single detail of Christ's Passion owes its origin to an influence of that sort, whether voluntary or involuntary; that is, to the transformation of a text into a concrete fact. The

[260] *Der Einfluss des Weissagungsbeweises und anderer Motive auf die Leidensgeschichte.*

[261] See 1 Cor. 1:23.

first Christians were simple and upright men, who would never have acted thus; the honesty of the Evangelists would have been no less opposed to such a procedure. The Rationalist critics seem to suppose that the history of the Passion, as we have it in the Gospels, is nothing but a tissue of prophecies, more or less clumsily connected with the events. The Gospels explicitly quote eight of them, no more.[262] It is true that the critics mention several others; but these critics themselves are the ones who insert them into the accounts, so as to be able to affirm that the accounts owe their origin to the prophecies. From this we can see how much credence ought to be given to their assertions, whether general or particular. We would add that the Passion of the Messias was truly predicted by the Old Testament prophecies, and that Jesus exactly fulfilled them. The prophetic element exists in relation to the Passion, as with regard to the other parts of our Lord's life; but, instead of weakening the historical character of the facts, it powerfully contributes to strengthen it.

XIV. The Resurrection

1. The Rationalists make determined efforts to eliminate the miracle of the Resurrection. That they should do so, was to be expected. Those who claim to overthrow the Christian religion would assuredly attempt to shatter the foundation pillar on which it rests. Those who deny the supernatural would certainly not leave standing, so far as depends on them, this miracle of miracles, of which St. Paul says that, if its falsity were proved, our faith would be vain, our sins would be unforgiven, the Apostles would be false witnesses before God and men.[263] To accomplish its aim, Rationalism successively

[262] They will be found in the following passages: Matt. 26:54 and Mark 14:49; Matt. 26:56; Matt. 27:9 f.; Mark 15:28 (possibly this one did not exist); John 19:24, 28, 36, 37.

[263] See 1 Cor. 15:14–19.

invents various theories to prove that Christ's Resurrection has no historical foundation. We shall cite the principal ones, and it will be seen how futile is their attack upon the fact so well attested by the Gospel narratives, by the Apostles, and by Christian tradition.

2. This great fact, the greatest in the world's history after that of the Incarnation, of which it is the natural consequence, offers every guaranty that can be desired from the standpoint of historical criticism. To deny its reality, one must approach it with preconceived ideas, as the Rationalists do.[264] *"Surrexit Dominus vere,* The Lord is risen indeed." [265] These glad tidings, handed down by the Apostles, have served as a motto for the Church since the first day of her establishment down to our own time, and will do so till the end of the world.

Aside from the differences in wording already mentioned, to which we shall have to refer again presently, the Gospel narratives possess all the simplicity, clearness, and veracity that can be demanded. Manifestly their authors were well informed about the details of which they speak, some of which they saw with their own eyes. From Rationalist ranks we hear the complaint [266] that the Evangelists are silent regarding the principal fact. But that very silence is a proof of their good faith. They did not intend to relate what they did not know. An apocryphal gospel, the so-called Gospel of Peter, tried to do so, and leaves us the following account: "In the night, when the Lord's day [Sunday] began to dawn, while the soldiers were standing two by two on guard, a reverberating sound broke out in the heavenly spheres, and they saw the sky open, and two men gleaming with splendor

[264] That would be an altogether prodigious miracle, and "modern reason feels unable to admit its reality. . . . The idea of the resurrection of a really dead body could be adopted only in an age and by men lacking the physiological notions that have been acquired since then." (A. Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth,* II, 453.)

[265] Luke 24: 34.

[266] J. Weiss, *Die Schriften des N. T.,* I, 372.

approaching the sepulchre. The stone which had been placed before the entrance began to roll of itself, and it moved to one side. The sepulchre opened, and the two young men entered in. . . . Then the soldiers saw three men issue from the sepulchre; the two young men supporting the other, and a cross followed behind them. The head of the two reached the heaven; but the head of him whom they led rose above the heavens. The soldiers heard a voice coming from the heavens. It said: Hast thou preached to those who sleep [to the dead confined in limbo]? In reply, was heard this word coming from the cross: Yes . . . The heavens again opened, and a man descended and entered into the sepulchre." This last was one of the angels that appeared to the holy women.[267] If the Evangelists had not been honest historians, they could have invented a less "gross" [268] legend.

As a second proof, also irrefutable and sufficient by itself, we have mentioned the Apostolic preaching. It antedated the writing of the Gospels by many years, for it was heard in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost, in the discourse which St. Peter addressed to the Jews immediately after the descent of the Holy Ghost. Only fifty-two days after Christs' death, commenting on this text from a Psalm attributed to David,[269]

> "My heart hath been glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced;
> Moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope.
> Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,
> Nor suffer thy Holy One to see corruption,"

St. Peter draws a striking parallel between the burial of the great king and that of Jesus, saying: "Ye men, brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David; that he

[267] E. Nestle, *Novi Testamenti Graeci Supplementum*, p. 70; Preuschen, *Antilegomena*, p. 116; Hennecke, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*, p. 31.

[268] This is the well-deserved adjective used by J. Weiss, whose criticism we have quoted.

[269] Ps. 15:9–10 (Heb., 16:9–10).

died and was buried; and his sepulchre is with us to this present day." [270] Therefore, David's inspired words cannot apply to himself. But, continues the Apostle, "whereas he was a prophet, and knew that God hath sworn to him with an oath, that of the fruit of his loins one should sit upon his throne, foreseeing this, he spoke of the Resurrection of Christ. For neither was He left in hell, neither did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised again, whereof all we are witnesses." If St. Peter had not been convinced of his Master's Resurrection, his words would have been playing into the hands of the Jewish authorities and the other foes of the new religion, for they could easily have opened the tomb where Jesus had been buried, and the lie would have been at once disclosed. But neither then nor at the time of his other discourses, did anyone attempt to contradict him.

St. Paul's testimony, in the First Epistle to the Corinthians,[271] also has particular value because of its official character, and because of the fact that the Apostle of the Gentiles, a man of positive mind, not only was favored in person by an apparition of the risen Christ, but after his conversion certainly did not fail to inform himself directly from the Apostles and the first disciples. It was only a few years after our Lord's Ascension that St. Paul became a Christian.[272] His First Epistle to the Corinthians dates not later than the year 56; [273] hence it is perhaps anterior to the Gospels of Mark and Luke. The most important passage for the present question is a summary list, without details, of the apparitions of the risen Savior: "I delivered unto you first of all, which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures, and that He was

[270] Acts 2: 29–33.
[271] See 1 Cor. 15: 3–9.
[272] Probably in the year 34 or 35.
[273] Perhaps even earlier.

seen by Cephas,[274] and after that by the eleven. Then was He seen by more than five hundred brethren at once, of whom many remain until this present . . . After that, He was seen by James,[275] then by all the Apostles. And last of all, He was seen also by me."

The reader must have noted, in connection with Christ's appearing to the five hundred disciples, the indirect appeal which Paul makes to the testimony of such of them as were still living—a large number certainly. Sceptics could easily have consulted them. It is also to be noted that, when the writer speaks of several apparitions omitted by the Evangelists,[276] he does not mention those which Jesus made to the holy women. This fact is due to what we have called the official character of this little document, which is concerned only with official and well-known personages. The apparition to the five hundred disciples is, in a way, an exception; but its value comes from the great number of witnesses. Lastly let us add that the testimony of women had less weight in ancient times than it would have now. It was because he believed so whole-heartedly in Christ's Resurrection that St. Paul reverts to it so often in his letter, making many and fruitful applications of it to the Christian life. Furthermore, it was quite just that the Apostolic preaching should insist upon this point which, on more than one occasion, must have aroused a feeling of incredulity in pagan hearers.[277] It was the first dogma taught by Christian missionaries, the first to which the neophytes adhered, that with which all the others were connected. The proofs which the preachers gave of it were so strong that, connected as they were with the Savior's life, which at once received succinct developments in the

[274] Peter's Aramaic name.

[275] James the Less, Christ's cousin.

[276] For a more detailed explanation, consult the commentaries on the Epistles to the Corinthians.

[277] Cf. Acts 17:32.

preaching, they aroused faith in Christ and a generous love for Him, and produced conversion. One of the greatest enemies of Christianity [278] has acknowledged that the Church could never have been founded if the Apostles had not been convinced of the truth of the Resurrection. We may supplement this thought by adding that the Apostles would never have reached that conviction, had they not had undeniable proofs of that prodigy.

3. We thought it well to assemble the testimony of the Evangelists and the Apostles before passing on to the explanations which Rationalism tries to give of the Gospel accounts relative to the Savior's Resurrection. Before going farther, we should determine the true notion of the Resurrection of Jesus. We shall see that the meaning has been essentially falsified on the pretext of rendering this mystery easier to believe. Our Lord's Resurrection is, first of all, the return to life, by reunion with His soul, of the body He possessed when He drew His last breath on the cross, the body that was enclosed in the tomb. It is the same body, but endowed with new qualities, which make of it a glorified and thenceforth immortal body. Though remaining material, since it can be seen and touched, to a certain extent it is spiritualized; that is why it can transport itself in an instant from one place to another, pass through solid substances without encountering any resistance, etc. In this, Christ's body after His glorious coming forth from the tomb differed from the bodies of others raised from the dead—from the body of Lazarus, for instance. The stigmata of its wounds showed that it was the same body as formerly; various details of its manifestations attest that it was henceforth glorified. Such is the sense according to which there is question of our Lord's Resurrection in the Gospels and other New Testament writings. Consequently we must reject the notion of a pretended Resurrec-

[278] Strauss.

tion which would have consisted simply in the immortality of Christ's soul, with this single difference, that His soul, upon leaving limbo, would have been clothed with a bodily appearance, permitting Him to manifest Himself outwardly. To state such an idea regarding the Resurrection is, in fact, to deny it while seeming to accept it; it would be a curious and not wholly honest attempt.[279]

4. We have already directed attention to the divergences existing between the four Gospel accounts regarding the apparitions of the risen Christ. The Rationalists, not satisfied with exaggerating them, declare that they are real contradictions, and thence conclude that we cannot rely on any of the Evangelists in this matter.[280] They put forward the list of the apparitions given by St. Paul as opposed to the Evangelists, and then reject the latter while not believing in the former.[281] We have already said that we might wish for a more perfect external harmony between the narratives, and we do not doubt but that the Evangelists, by entering into more numerous details, chronological and otherwise, could have produced that accord. But, since we must take the accounts as they are, we will again remark: (a) that these differences, though sometimes quite notable, never affect the substance of the facts, especially of the principal fact, and that they concern only secondary points;[282] (b) that these differences spring precisely from the very conciseness of language and the incomplete character of the narrative; (c) that in all fairness

[279] W. R. Nicoll, *The Church's One Foundation*, 3d ed., p. 133.

[280] The question is treated at length from the Rationalist standpoint by A. Meyer, *Die Auferstehung Christi*, pp. 85–105.

[281] A. Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 449: "In Paul's enumeration there is no place for the appearance to the women at the tomb or for the appearance that took place on the mountain in Galilee or, if we examine the text carefully, for that at Emmaus. . . . The accounts are notably incoherent."

[282] It is quite true, as Farrar says, that "the 'ten discrepancies' . . . have never for one hour shaken the faith of Christendom." (*The Life of Christ*, II, 432, note.)

they cannot be regarded as real contradictions; in reality, by means of the four Gospels and without the least violence, we can establish a satisfactory sequence of events, as is proved by the numerous attempts of conciliation that have been proposed since the first centuries of Christianity up to our own time;[283] (d) that the Liberal theologians would not have been satisfied if the Evangelists had given us, in the matter of Christ's Resurrection, a uniform account, treating the same incidents and setting them forth in the same manner, for then they would have been accused of agreeing among themselves so as to give the facts a greater appearance of truth; (e) that these very divergences, which are to be met with in all writers, ancient and modern, who have written the history of the same event,[284] are a guaranty of their independence and truthfulness; it would have been a simple matter for the Evangelists who published their accounts last, to be at agreement with their predecessors, had they so wished. To make these differences a basis for denying the historical character of the narratives is, therefore, a recourse to a violent and arbitrary method.

5. Independently of the general objection, based on the frequent divergences in the accounts, the Rationalists, for about two centuries past, have proposed various theories or

[283] See St. Augustine, *De Consensu Evangel.*, III, 61–85; Tischendorf, *Synopsis Evangelica*, pp. xlix–lii; the Lives of Christ written by authors who are not influenced by preconceived ideas; Porquet, S. J., *Les Récits Évangéliques de la Résurrection du Christ; Conciliation des Textes.*

[284] "When Livy and Polybius and Dionysius and Tacitus relate the same event, for example, the same battle, the siege of a certain city, each with so widely different circumstances that the details given by one show the falsity of the details given by the other, has this fact ever been considered a reason for denying the reality of the event which is the subject of their accounts? . . . But, if we treat Livy and Dionysius and Polybius and Tacitus simply and loyally, without subjecting each of their syllables to torture, why do we not treat Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the same way?" These words of the Rationalist Lessing are quoted by Ihmels, *Die Auferstehung Jesu Christi*, p. 10. And this difference is to be noted in favor of the Evangelists, that the account of one nowhere manifests the falsity of the account of another.

hypotheses to undermine the very basis of the miracle of Christ's Resurrection. The chief ones are the hypothesis of a gross fraud perpetrated by the disciples, that of a merely apparent death, and that of visions.

a) The first was set forth by Reimarus in his famous "Fragments of Wolfenbüttel," [285] the fifth of which is entitled: "The Gospel Accounts of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ." The author is animated by a profound hatred of Christianity. He even accuses our Lord of ambitious and revolutionary intrigues, designed to restore the ancient Jewish royalty in His favor. He was arrested by the leaders of the nation, was condemned, and died on a cross. But His disciples did not wish to be thought defeated. Fifty-two days after His death, on the day of Pentecost, they took possession of His corpse, which had had time to become unrecognizable, and carefully hid it; then they pretended that He was risen, and that He had ascended to Heaven, whence He would some day return to judge the whole world. For a while, Reimarus found followers, who took this tissue of lies for genuine truth. But to-day his theory of Christ's Resurrection is totally abandoned, because it so obviously falsifies the facts and especially because it outrages the moral character of our Lord and His disciples, whom no one is willing to regard as vile impostors. Various ardent Rationalists, such as Strauss,[286] have refuted it vigorously. Keim finds it "repugnant and unworthy," [287] and, in the footsteps of Strauss, he reminds us that it was proposed by the pagan Celsus long ago. [288]

b) The second theory, which we are about to explain, formerly had followers; but Strauss, Keim, and others [289] have shown its impossibility and absurdity. According to this

[285] See Fillion, *Les Étapes du Rationalisme*, pp. 9–19.
[286] *Leben Jesu* (1836 ed.), II, 653–655.
[287] *Jesus von Nazara*, III, 571.
[288] Origen, *Contra Cels.*, II, 55.
[289] Strauss, *Leben Jesu*, II, 651; Keim, *Jesus von Nazara*, III, 573–576.

theory, Jesus was not really dead when He was taken down from the cross, but had merely fallen into a catalepsy. The coolness of the tomb and the odor of the spices gradually awaked Him from His torpor; the earthquake brought Him back to life and rolled back the stone that closed the entrance of the sepulchre. Jesus then freed Himself from the burial wrappings, dressed in the clothes which the gardener had left, and appeared to Mary Magdalen, to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, and to the Apostles gathered in the cenacle. Yet finding Himself still very weak, He led a retired life. From these details we can recognize Paulus and his natural explanation of miracles.[290]

But, previous to him, others had resorted to this hypothesis, which, like the preceding, is "a tissue of material and moral improbabilities." Albert Réville, from whom we quote this severe judgment,[291] has no difficulty in justifying it. "Materially," he says, "we may consider as among impossible things the supposition that a man already crushed with fatigue, exhausted by ill-treatment,[292] nailed to a cross for several hours, taken down, buried, and left in a closed tomb, is in a physical condition to come forth alone some thirty-six hours later, and at once to make the short and the long journeys which the accounts suppose. . . . The explanation based upon the hypothesis that Jesus was taken down from the cross before death had accomplished its work and that He just naturally returned to life, is precisely the only explanation which neither foes nor friends even thought of. . . . In fine, after we have studied the character of Jesus at close range, after we have been able to appreciate His uprightness and candor and courage . . . , can we for a moment picture Him as allowing His disciples to believe that He is risen,

[290] Fillion, *Les Étapes du Rationalisme,* pp. 34–44.
[291] *Jésus de Nazareth,* II, 455.
[292] The scourging alone was sometimes so severe as to cause death.

when He Himself knows that He is not?" [293] And what became of Him then? Where was He hidden? Where did He die? These are additional impossibilities.

c) At present, Rationalist criticism has almost entirely ceased to demand of outward facts an explanation which they are unable to supply regarding the Savior's Resurrection. The critics now turn to psychology, in an effort to find a support for their negations. The theory most favored to-day is that Christ's Resurrection was created entirely by the visions of the Apostles, the disciples, and the holy women.[294] This thesis has been propagated chiefly by Strauss, Renan, Holsten, J. Weiss, Arnold Meyer, and Albert Réville, who devote to it long psychological descriptions in an effort to make it presentable.[295] We can do no more than give its substance.

The imagination of our Lord's disciples had been disturbed by the emotions they had experienced since the evening of His arrest. But it had produced an indelible impression on their simple and devoted hearts. At first they were dejected by His death and the apparent failure of His work; but gradually they felt a return of the exalted sentiments which they had entertained toward Him. Their confidence revived at the memory of His holiness, His miracles, His promises, and His mighty personality. As they thought of Him they read the Scriptures, and applied to Him all the passages that seemed to refer to Him, considered as the Messias. Thus they became convinced that He had reached the supreme glory, a veritable apotheosis, by passing through suffering. "It is not possible that He is forever dead; He must be still alive," was the reflection that resulted from their meditations. Their faith and love quickly advanced another step and transformed their

[293] *Op. cit.*, p. 455.

[294] In this matter, too, Celsus was the precursor of modern Rationalism. (Cf. Origen, *Contra Cels.*, II, 55.)

[295] Especially A. Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 463–473; A. Meyer, *Die Auferstehung Christi*, pp. 272–315.

desire into reality; of a sudden they cried: "He lives!" At this thought, their excitement increased, and, aided by the recollection of the empty tomb, they were seized by a "visionary state" and, one after another, imagined that they had really seen Him.

This is what Christ's Resurrection amounts to, if studied according to Rationalist principles. We will not devote many pages to a refutation, but will merely draw attention to the numerous incompatibilities in this theory, which is certainly more difficult to accept than the Gospel accounts, studied without any ulterior preconception. (a) It is incompatible, first of all, with the state of mind of the Apostles and the other disciples, who had ceased to hope for their Master's Resurrection and were so hard to convince of His return to life. They seem to have been simply looking forward to His return, in a glorified state, to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. The holy women especially, to whom the Rationalists assign the principal part in the so-called visions, had so little belief in the Resurrection of the Master's body, that they wished to embalm it a second time, in order to save it from corruption as long as possible. (b) It is incompatible with the natural and transparent character of the Evangelical accounts, which draw a clear distinction between phantasm and reality. In St. Luke's Gospel we read: "They being troubled and frightened, supposed that they saw a spirit. And He said to them: Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See My hands and feet, that it is I Myself; handle, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see Me to have." [296] The risen Savior gives His friends not only visible proofs of His Resurrection, but has them touch Him and eats in their presence. (c) It is incompatible with the small number of the apparitions. Had the disciples been visionaries, they would have had, not a

[296] Luke 24: 38 f.

dozen, but a hundred and more. (d) It is incompatible with the abrupt cessation of these same phenomena. If they were provoked for forty days by a psychological exaltation, how did it happen that they suddenly came to an end after Christ's Ascension? The critics have seen this difficulty and arbitrarily declare that the visions continued for a whole year and even longer.[297] (e) It is incompatible with common sense, in particular with the common sense of the Apostles, as we know them from the sacred narratives. They were whole-heartedly devoted to their Master, but they were not enthusiasts by nature, as is evident from the history of the Passion. Christ's death left them very depressed—a state which is far from favorable for visions. The Rationalists say that the Apostles and other disciples were not philosophers or psychologists, that in all good faith they may have taken their subjective visions for real apparitions. No, indeed; that was impossible under the conditions set forth by the Evangelists. Need anyone pursue psychological studies to know whether he has before him a being of flesh and bones, or a mere phantom? (f) It is incompatible with the great number of witnesses. Besides the individual apparitions to Magdalen, Peter, etc., there were others to several persons at the same time: before the Apostles gathered in the cenacle, before the holy women, before more than five hundred disciples, etc. Can it reasonably be supposed that all this crowd was at the same time under the influence of hallucination? (g) It is incompatible with the unshaken faith of the Christian Church in the doctrine of the Resurrection of her Divine Founder. In the words of a Rationalist critic, "recourse to a visionary illusion is

[297] An example of the exaggerations made by Rationalism. "Visions (a period of intense feverishness) were multiplied without number. . . . In a few days, a whole string of stories was spread abroad. . . . These grand and melancholy dreams occupied the days and months. Nearly a year rolled on." (Renan, *The Apostles*, pp. 14, 19, 20.)

impossible in face of the universality and firmness of conviction in the bosom of the Church." [298]

We might say, as Keim does,[299] that a certain time would have to be allowed to make it possible for Christ's friends to pass from the state of profound sadness and discouragement into which His death had plunged them, to the exaltation presupposed by these visions. Various critics claim several years for that. But, according to the Evangelists, the Savior's apparitions began on the third day after His death. It should also be noted that these manifestations did not have an exciting effect upon those who witnessed them, but, on the contrary, calmed them and led them to devote themselves generously and without reserve to their Master's work. Such is not usually the result of false visions.

Keim, who protests against this theory as he does against the other two,[300] somewhat modifies it with a view to making the Gospel narratives more acceptable. According to him, there was no Resurrection in the strict sense. By a special permission of God, or directly by virtue of a power belonging to the glorified spirit of Jesus and of His particular privileges, there occurred a series of phenomena which, although they were real, were not at all material or corporeal. On several occasions, the soul of Christ was manifested to His disciples, producing effects like those that would have resulted from an external and material apparition. To use Keim's expression,[301] Christ sent, as it were, "telegrams from heaven" to the Apostles and their companions to comfort them, proving to them that He would not abandon them, but remain with them to continue His work.

This, surely, is a curious sort of explanation, especially if we recall what must be understood by the word "Resurrec-

[298] E. Reuss, *L'Histoire Évangélique*, p. 701.
[299] *Jesus von Nazara*, III, 597.
[300] *Op. cit.*, pp. 602–606.
[301] *Op. cit.*, p. 605.

tion." Some Protestant theologians, especially in England, adopt it for the purpose of diminishing the miracle of Christ's Resurrection as much as possible and of thereby believing in it the more easily. But the more advanced Rationalists reject this theory because it does not sufficiently suppress the supernatural. And Christians reject it, too. It has no genuine basis. Moreover, it supposes that, with the connivance of God and of Jesus, the Christian faith rests upon an illusion, since Christ would not be truly risen.

It is useless to repeat that these various theories are in flat contradiction with the Gospel accounts. These narratives cause very little concern to the Rationalists, who set out with no other purpose but to prove their falsity. The reader will judge. An honest examination will promptly show on which side historic truth is to be found.

One more word, regarding Christ's tomb, which was found empty early in the morning of the third day after the crucifixion. This empty sepulchre somewhat embarrasses the Rationalist critics. Not because, of itself, it is enough to prove that Jesus was risen. But it permits of a dilemma: The sepulchre was empty either because God, by the most brilliant of miracles, had reanimated the body of Christ, or because that body had been fraudulently removed. The latter alternative wins the immediate support of the Rationalists. They try hard to prove it by resorting to every possible hypothesis: the taking of the body by the disciples, as the Jewish chief priests affirmed at the beginning;[302] or by Joseph of Arimathea, who, we are told, would not allow the body of a crucified person to be kept very long in his sepulchre; or by the Jews themselves.[303] None of these hypotheses is tenable. As Wellhausen rightly says,[304] "it is certain that . . . the body of

[302] Matt. 28: 11–15.

[303] This is the view of Albert Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, 463–478.

[304] *Das Evangelium Matthäi*, p. 150.

Jesus had disappeared from the tomb, and it is impossible to explain that fact in any natural way." From the very first day, both friends and foes were at one in attesting that the tomb had been found empty. What then? Are we to say that the Savior's body was simply thrown into the "charnel house" provided for the bodies of those who had been executed, or into "the common ditch"? Loisy [305] and some others do not hesitate to accept this ignominious assertion, notwithstanding the clear language of the Gospels and of tradition. But, in the matter of the Resurrection of Christ, more than in any other part, the Gospel narratives are, for the Rationalists, only the product of "Christian reflection," which arranged, embellished, and often invented the facts; hence they deserve, not only disbelief, but denial and protest.[306] We reply, as does an eminent English commentator,[307] that, to deny the truthfulness of the Gospel accounts in this matter, one must be armed with an obdurate scepticism, born of supremely unfair *a priori* theories. As St. Augustine says: *"Resurrexit Christus, absoluta res est."* [308]

XV. The Ascension

Negative criticism, which rejects our Lord's Resurrection as impossible, thereby evidently denies the historical character

[305] *Les Évangiles Synoptiques,* I, 213.

[306] Like Brandt with regard to our Lord's Passion, Arnold Meyer (*Die Auferstehung Christi*) rejects nearly all the Gospel details of Christ's Resurrection. Loisy does the same in his *Évangiles Synoptiques* and elsewhere. See Lepin, *Les Théories de M. Loisy, Exposé et Critique,* pp. 209–219. A refutation of these various systems will be found in the following works: Swete, *The Appearances of our Lord after His Passion;* Orr, *The Resurrection of Jesus;* Ihmels, *Die Auferstehung Jesu Christi;* Riggenbach, *Die Auferstehung Jesu;* Dentler, *Die Auferstehung Jesu nach den Berichten des N. T.;* Ladeuze, *La Résurrection du Christ devant la Science Contemporaine;* Mangenot, *La Résurrection de Jésus* and *Les Évangiles Synoptiques,* pp. 333–362.

[307] Swete, *op. cit.*

[308] *Tractatus in Joan.,* 101, towards the end.

of His Ascension, relegating it likewise to the domain of myth or legend. Some do not even take any notice of the event, although it is the culmination of the Savior's earthly life. A few, however, attack it without discretion,[309] and also without originality, again having recourse to their usual methods.

Though our Lord's Ascension is but briefly recounted by SS. Mark and Luke, it is one of the best attested facts in the New Testament. Independently of the three narratives that form the basis of our account,[310] we have the Savior's words predicting it,[311] and numerous texts that presuppose it or allude to it in one way or another.[312] Herein lies a precious guaranty of its historical character, raised the very first day to the height of a dogma of faith. The three accounts are very simple and summary, containing no detail that can possibly be regarded as a poetic or legendary embellishment. How they differ from the apocryphal accounts! Do but read chapters 14–29 in the second part of the Acts of Pilate.[313] Seeing what happens to a Gospel event in the hands of the sorry writers who engage in that sort of literature, we have a greater appreciation of the truthfulness of the Gospels, which are content to set forth the events with a restraint that may seem exaggerated to our pious desire for a fuller knowledge of everything concerning Christ. It reflects no honor on Keim that he says that "the Ascension of Jesus is one of the latest and least warranted excrescences of the Christian legend." [314]

[309] *E. g.*, Strauss, Renan, F. Baur, Schenkel; Keim, *Geschichte Jesu von Nazara*, III, 606–621, and Schmiedel, *Resurrection and Ascension Narratives*, in Cheyne's *Encyclopedia Biblica*.

[310] Mark 16:19; Luke 24:49–51; Acts 1:1 f.

[311] John 6:63; 20:17.

[312] Matt. 9:15; 26:11, 29, 64; John 7:33; 14:28; 16:5, 10, 17, 28; Acts 2:33; 3:21; 5:31; 7:55; 13:35–37; Eph. 4:8–10; Phil. 1:23; 2:9; Col. 3:1; 1 Thess. 1:10; 4:14–16; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Peter 3:22; Heb. 1:3; 2:9; 12:2; Apoc. 1:13; 5:6, etc.

[313] Brunet, *Les Évangiles Apocryphes*, 2d ed., pp. 248–273.

[314] *Op. cit.*, p. 618.

We are told that this legend was formed after the analogy of the mysterious carrying off of Enoch and Elias in the Old Testament, or of the apotheosis of Roman emperors and other great personages of paganism; or that it was the idealization of the Savior's life pushed to extremes. But it is utterly arbitrary to claim that Jesus' life was idealized in the Gospels. It is no less false to declare that His Ascension was merely taken from Judaism or paganism, since there is nothing in common between Enoch or Elias or the Roman emperors, and Jesus Christ. The likeness is not made by the Evangelists, but by the Rationalist critics. Our Lord's Ascension has a distinct character, a distinct purpose, putting it in a class apart from those other events or legends with which it has been compared. It is in harmony with Christ's whole earthly existence; it is a logical consequence of His Incarnation and Resurrection; it is an integral part of the divine plan regarding our Redemption. If Christ "must" die and rise from the dead, He must also ascend to Heaven, for the earth is not suited to be the abiding place of His glorified body. Moreover, His work here on earth was accomplished. For forty days after His Resurrection He gave His final instruction to the Apostles and principal disciples; that period of transition could hardly be prolonged. His true place, therefore, was no longer among men, but with His divine Father in Heaven, whence, rejoicing His sacred humanity with the glory that it so well merited, He continues to govern His Church, unceasingly protecting and blessing it.

XVI. What Was Jesus?

The Liberal theologians ask this question, and one of them, after examining their replies, gives the following summary: "According to these theories, what is there that Jesus was not? A social reformer, in all the varied senses of this term;

a preacher of personal redemption by complete renunciation, in the sense of Buddhism; a type of nature essentially Germanic, as opposed to the Semitic race, to which Jesus did not belong; a herald of Pantheism, who, when speaking of God, was thinking only of the world taken as a whole; a preacher of charity, though not connecting with this sentiment a religious faith strictly so called, etc." [315] If the theories are more or less varied on the positive side, they are uniformly negative with regard to the divinity of Christ. If there was nothing of the supernatural in Him, if He was neither a real prophet nor a real miracle-worker, nor yet the Messias, how did He possess the divine nature?

Let us cite a few of these negations. They will show the abyss separating the Gospels from their contradictors.[316] We will not mention Strauss or Renan or Hase or Ewald; we will not go back beyond Keim.[317] His theological Liberalism has limits, and more than once he does justice to our Lord from a purely human standpoint; but in the present question he is as intransigent as his fellow-Rationalists. As is their wont, before depriving Jesus Christ of His chief title to glory, Keim prefaces what has ironically been called "an exercise of rhetoric," intended to make acceptable the negation in its most sinister content. He says: "The dethroned Messias has erected His throne in the history of the world and, after sixty generations, that throne still stands, despite all earthly instability. At the steps of that throne there reëcho in countless strains the praises which are sung by so many great ones and lowly of the earth, who, in that person, have gently loved the gem of their human existence." [318] These high-sounding

[315] Schmiedel, *Die Person Jesu im Streite der Meinungen der Gegenwart*, p. 4; see also Harnack, *What is Christianity?* p. 1.

[316] See Fillion, *Les Étapes du Rationalisme*, pp. 51, 65, 79, 114, 132, 145, 188, 190, 192, 195, 200–201, 212, 215, 217, 221, 267, etc.

[317] Died in 1878.

[318] *Jesus von Nazara*, III, 271.

phrases serve as an introduction to veritable blasphemies. "Our knowledge of history has been transformed; our thought has become sober; we must decisively renounce Greek mythology," that is, "the Son of God whom the wisdom of Alexandrian Jews and the Greek Church have bequeathed to us," a God who descended from Heaven, to become a "suckling, a man, a crucified one, and again a God."

According to Paul Wernle,[319] "for almost two thousand years" Christianity forgot what Jesus was and what He wished. But "to-day it again shines for us through the Gospels, as clearly and wonderfully as though the sun had just risen and, by its victorious rays, disperses all phantoms and shades of the night." By "night" is meant the state of Christianity for two thousand years; the sun and its conquering rays symbolize the Liberal theology; the shades and direful spectres represent the traditional Christology of the Church, the divinity of Christ and other Christian dogmas. If Wernle is "surfeited with Christology to the point of disgust," Arno Neumann is willing to go farther. He has written a small volume in which he sets forth and develops his profession of faith: "Within the limits of what is human, we too retain a hero of religion; before his majesty we bow with love." [320] This act of politeness does not go far, since it is addressed to a simple mortal, on whom the title of hero is conferred as a compensation for the divine honors that are denied Him.

We may mention Frenssen in passing. His Jesus is a dreamer who knows not what He wants or whither He tends, who is affected and irritable, and often lacking in dignity, who is only a defective man, not the equally ridiculous "superman" of whom He is said to be the type.[321] J. Weiss speaks in a language resembling that of Wernle: "The Gospels in

[319] *Die Quellen des Lebens Jesu*, p. 86.
[320] *Jesus, wer er geschichtlich war*, p. 104.
[321] *Das Leben des Heilands dargestellt.*

the hands of scholars, notwithstanding their apparent losses, become at once more interesting and more instructive, and, in a very true sense, more historic. The figure of Jesus becomes less mystical, but more real. . . . The Gospels have truly become new, because they are seen in a new light; and thus in reality they help us to comprehend Jesus more completely, to feel a warmer admiration for Him." [322]

Arnold Meyer pictures Jesus as addressing to the people of the twentieth century His famous question of long ago: "Who do you say that I am?" The reply is developed at considerable length, but it is far from resembling St. Peter's answer.[323] The author is obliged to acknowledge that "the immense majority of the venerators of Christ" have regarded Him as a God in the strict sense, from the beginning of Christianity down to our own day. This fact, however, does not keep him from adding: "To-day we knowingly give up the doctrine of the divinity of Christ; and we do this by basing our view on convincing proofs, taken from truth and religion." It was by a mistake that Jesus came gradually to be regarded as God; in the present age a quite different idea is formed of the divinity from the idea formerly held, and also a different idea of His rôle with regard to our terrestrial world; and the former concept is rejected as erroneous and useless. Moreover, "Jesus is never looked upon as a God, not even as a miracle-worker or a superhuman personage." [324] We shall not reply to these sophisms and false assertions, which the Gospels contradict at every step. Yet they are reëchoed in the writings of Albert Réville, Stapfer, Loisy, Harnack, Weinel, Schmiedel, and others, as if they were demonstrated truths.

In reality this method of criticism is degenerate. It lays

[322] *Die Schriften des N. T.*, I, 47.
[323] *Was uns Jesus heute ist.*
[324] A. Meyer, *Was uns Jesus heute ist*, pp. 17–29.

claim to being free and scientific, yet it makes abusive use of philosophical speculation and of dogmatism upon this important point as upon all the others. Someone has well said that it has "only the label" of criticism.[325] In fact, when Liberal theologians affirm that Jesus never attributed the divine nature to Himself, they place themselves in flagrant contradiction to the Gospels, the authors of which knew quite well what they were saying. In fact, these critics are at odds with the whole New Testament, where "Christ is represented as a superhuman being; never and nowhere is He what the so-called critical theology has wished to make Him, a purely natural man." These are the words of Albert Kalthoff,[326] one of the most ardent foes of our Lord, who even denies Christ's existence. But he is likewise a mighty adversary of the Liberal theologians, whose weaknesses he mercilessly exposes. Frankly he avows that orthodox Protestantism, and especially Catholicism, by considering Jesus both as the Son of God and as the Son of Man, have far better understood and preserved the true character attributed to Jesus by the Evangelists and the primitive Church, than have the members of this pseudo-Christian school. In all parts of the New Testament the figure of Jesus is crowned with the aureole of divinity; it constantly moves in an atmosphere of adoration.[327] Assuredly one must choose. Who can hesitate to stand on the side of these faithful witnesses, who saw and heard Jesus, who, as they themselves say, touched Him with their hands, and who have drawn so exact a portrait of Him for us? The others give only a "parody" and "caricature." [328]

There is one other great moral proof of our Lord's di-

[325] Larsen, *Jesus und die Religionsgeschichte*, p. 14.

[326] *Das Christus-Problem*, chaps. 2–4. Strauss held the same view (*New Life of Jesus*, II, 432.)

[327] See Zahn, *Die Anbetung Jesu im Zeitalter der Apostel.*

[328] Hering, *Wider das Christusbild der religionsgeschichtlichen Volksbücher*, p. 21.

vinity: the Church founded by Him, ever living, ever prospering, in spite of the repeated rude assaults of persecutors and heretics. Further, "if this Jesus is nothing more than a supremely good Jew of the olden time, . . . how are we going to explain the way the world is going after Him? . . . Those who think it all incredible should go and look for themselves. They would find men and women of races and cultures and languages lying poles asunder, all taking hold in their different ways of this unlettered Jew of long ago. By an instinct that men cannot explain, they all find in Him their own countryman and contemporary, the Friend of their own daily life, the strength of their realized weakness. Who less than the Son of Man, He who is Universal Man because He was God over all, could thus meet the heart's needs of every son of man?" [329]

We may suppose that the Liberal theologians, when they remember that they have despoiled Jesus of His superior attributes, of His divinity and miracles, and have also eliminated most of His deeds and words, sometimes ask themselves this disturbing question: "Are we still Christians?" [330] They know quite well that they are so only in name, and they openly admit that they are so no longer in the same sense as the first disciples of Jesus. With reference to the publication of a particularly subversive work on the origins of Christianity, Professor Kaftan, an orthodox Protestant, says: "A Christian does not write thus"; [331] and with regard to Bousset's little book, entitled "Jesus," he says: "They have taken away the Lord." [332] Notwithstanding so many attacks on His humanity and His divinity, Jesus Christ, as revealed to us in the writings of SS. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, ever

[329] Moulton in *The Hibbert Journal*, July, 1909, p. 766.
[330] Cf. Hermann, *Erlösung*, p. 42.
[331] *Moderne Theologie des Alten Glaubens*, p. 3.
[332] *Ibid.*, p. 56; an allusion to Mary Magdalen's words in John 20: 12.

remains the object of the faith and hope and love of Christians worthy of that name: *"Jesus Christus heri et hodie; ipse et in saecula."* [333]

[333] Heb. 13:8. See Lepin, *Jésus, Messie et Fils de Dieu d'après les Évangiles Synoptiques*, 4th ed.; Braig, J. Esser, etc., *Jesus Christus, apologetische Vorträge;* Felder, *Jesus Christus, Apologie seiner Messianität und Gottheit gegenüber der ungläubigen Jesus-Forschung;* Tillmann, *Das Selbstbewusstsein des Gottessohnes auf Grund der synoptischen Evangelien;* and de Grandmaison's remarkable article "Jésus-Christ" in the *Dictionnaire Apologétique de la Foi Catholique,* Vol. II, cols. 1288–1538.

XVII. Sunday Gospel References

For greater convenience in locating the author's explanation of those portions of the sacred narrative contained in the Gospels for Sundays and the principal feasts of the year, the following table is appended:

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